NYPL RESEARCH LIBRARIES
3 3433 08044675 4

A

WINTER IN THE WEST.

BY A NEW-YORKER.

Where can I journey to your secret springs,
Eternal Nature? Onward still I press,
Follow thy windings still, yet sigh for more.
COPLEY.

Checked
May 1913

(a-6)7

... to Act of Congress, in the year 1835, by CHARLES
... the Clerk of the Southern District

A WINTER IN THE WEST.

VOL. II.

A

WINTER IN THE WEST.

LETTER XXIII.

Prairie du Chien, Upper Miss., Feb. 12th, 1834.

The shadows of its western bluffs had deepened far over the broad surface of the ice-bound Mississippi, though a flood of yellow light still bathed the gray walls of Fort Crawford, as its extensive barracks lay in the form of an isolated square on the level meadow beneath us; while, farther to the north, a number of dingy wooden buildings, which showed like a fishing hamlet,* on the immediate bank of the river, were momentarily growing more indistinct in the advancing twilight as we approached their purlieus, and drove up to a cabaret about half a mile from the garrison.

It was within pistol-shot of the river; a com-

* See note A.

fortable frame-building, with a stockade fence around it, made with pickets, some ten or fifteen feet high; a voyageur or two, with a few half-breed-looking residents, were loitering about the door; and a tall Menomone Indian, with a tuft of drooping feathers on his crown, was standing with folded arms apart from the rest.

A portly soldier-like German, who had formerly been a non-commissioned officer in the infantry, proved to be the landlord, and bowed me, like a master of his business, into a room heated to suffocation by a large Canadian stove, placing at the same time a strip of newly-written paper in my hands. Imagine my surprise when I discovered it to be a playbill! "The *public*" were respectfully informed, that the sterling English comedy of "Who Wants a Guinea?" and Fielding's afterpiece of "Don Quixote in England," with songs, recitations, &c., would be presented that evening, by the soldiers of the First Regiment at Fort Crawford. Nothing could be more apropos. I had just ascertained that on account of the present deep snows, with the prospect of an early thaw, it would be almost impossible to get up to the Falls of St. Anthony, whither my ambition led me, at this season; and having now no further plans to arrange during the evening, and being

wholly unprovided with letters to the officers of the garrison, I was really rejoiced at such an opportunity of entering its walls incognito.

The sleigh in which I had come carried me in a few minutes within the sally-port, and handing the ticket with which mine host had provided me to a soldier who acted as door-keeper, I entered a large barrack-room, fitted up very neatly as a theatre by the soldiers themselves; the scenery, quite cleverly done, being all painted by them, and the lights, ingeniously placed in bayonets, prettily arranged,—a contrivance suggested by their own taste. The seats, rising like the pit of a theatre, were so adjusted as to separate the audience into three divisions: the officers, with their families, furnished one, the soldiers another, and "gumboes," Indians, and a negro servant or two made up the third. A superb-looking squaw of the Sauk and Fox* tribe attracted my attention as I entered the room, and prevented me from advancing beyond the worshipful part of the assemblage last mentioned, as she sat between two pretty but plainly-dressed Menomonet girls, in a more rich and beau-

* "The united bands of the Saukies and Ottigaumies, the French nicknamed, according to their wonted custom, Des Sacs and Des Renards—the Sacks and the Foxes."—*Carver.*

† The Mè-nó-mò-nè, or wild-rice-eaters, is a broken band that served with effect against the Sauks and Foxes in the Indian dif-

tiful costume than I ever saw at a fancy ball. The curtain rose while I was studying her noble features and tasteful finery, and contrasting the striking and somewhat voluptuous character of both with the simple attire and less mature charms of the two nut-brown beauties beside her. Every eye was then directed to the stage, and I remained standing against the door-post till the act was concluded: and then, just as I was wishing for some one to whom to express my surprise at the degree of skill and judgment with which the soldiers played, considering they were but amateurs, an officer made his way up to me, and very politely insisted upon my taking his seat in the more favoured part of the house. The ordinary interchange of commonplaces between gentlemen who are strangers to each other ensued, and then, without his knowing my name or the slightest circumstance in relation to me, an invitation to take up

ficulties of 1832. They are a finely shaped people, of a much lighter complexion than the other North-western tribes, and exhibit a great deal of taste in preparing, and neatness in wearing, the various articles of Indian dress—ornamented belts, gaiters, sheaths for knives, moccasins, &c. In Long's Expedition they are mentioned as "The White Indians," and are supposed not to belong to the Algonquin stock. It is said that few white men have ever been able to learn their language; and in their intercourse they use the melange of the Chippewa, Ottawa, and Pottawattamie dialects, which is the common medium of communication on the frontier.—*See Long's Expedition, Charlevoix, &c.*

my quarters in the garrison followed. I declined the invitation, but we exchanged cards; and I had hardly got through breakfast in the morning, when my new and gentleman-like acquaintance, accompanied by Colonel T., the commandant, and a young subaltern, called to repeat the invitation of the evening before; bringing a soldier with a sled to transport my baggage, and a led horse to carry myself over to the garrison. It would have been absurd to meet such cordial and unfeigned proffers of hospitality with further ceremony; and an hour after found me with a handsomely-furnished room of my own, a fine saddle-horse placed at my disposal, and a servant at my call, sitting down to the mess with as fine a set of young fellows as I ever met with. I have been particular in describing my initiation into this agreeable and accomplished circle, merely to give you some idea of the gentleman-like courtesy and frank hospitality which distinguish the officers of the army, wherever I have been fortunate enough to meet with them.

I have now been here nearly two weeks. The weather has been mild and beautiful, and my time, in such congenial society, passes delightfully,—so much so, indeed, that when I wake each morn at reveille, it is with a kind of sad feeling I remem-

ber, that the twenty-four hours just past bring me nearer to the time when I must start again on my solitary tour, through regions where fortune can hardly throw me a second time among such companions.

The garrison here consists of five companies of infantry, under the command of a lieutenant-colonel. They are well quartered in very handsome barracks, built by the soldiers themselves of cut stone; the buildings being arranged in the form of a square, and enclosing an area large enough for a battalion to drill in. The parade is nicely gravelled, and a colonnade, which extends around three sides of the parade, gives a cheerful aspect to the whole. The hospital stands by itself on a slight knoll about a hundred yards from the barracks, and both are pleasantly situated near the banks of the Mississippi. The place, as it now stands, would be easily tenable against hordes of Indians, should they be mad enough to assail it. There is not a tree around it, and it is furnished with a park of artillery, which, from an open interval left at each angle of the parallelogram, could sweep the whole prairie. But these openings, which are flanked by no works whatsoever, by breaking the unity of the square, destroy even the appearance of a fortification; and the place, if not carried by

an assault from a regular force, would easily fall before its formal approaches. Such an attack was indeed never contemplated when Fort Crawford —which was only intended to overawe the Indians —was erected; but even in a collection of barracks, one likes to see them so disposed as to preserve a military air. There is a small but well-chosen library belonging to the post, and several of the companies have quite good miscellaneous libraries of their own,—a fact exceedingly creditable to the private soldiers. The amusements of the place, so far as society is concerned, are of course limited. The officers' families do indeed make a small circle; and for those who like to study life in all its phases, there is the little village of Prairie du Chien about half a mile from the garrison, with its antique-looking timber-built houses, containing an amphibious population of voyageurs and hunters, half French and half Indian. Here the officers sometimes amuse themselves in getting up what is called a gumbo ball, which, from the descriptions I have had of them, must be a kind of harlequinade I would very much like to see. Sporting, however,—when the resources of the library are exhausted, or a pipe of kinnekinic ceases to charm,—is the great source of amusement at Prairie du Chien. The grouse

now keep in large packs near the garrison; snipe, too, I am told, are abundant when in season, and of ducks I am assured it is easy to kill a canoe-load, when they begin to fly along the Mississippi. Elk, bear, and wolves are the game of those who are more ambitious in their sport, and choose to go farther to seek it. The meat of the first I have not yet tasted, but I made a capital dinner yester-noon from a sirloin of the second at the command-ant's quarters. Bruin was served up in handsome style, and some old wine from Colonel T.'s hospit-able cellar relished in this latitude.

The scenery around Prairie du Chien would please you much. The snow has now entirely left the bosom of the prairie, though it still hangs like flakes of morning mist around the rocky brows of the adjacent bluffs. The singular landscape created by these bold heights has been called monotonous; but I do not find it so. Not a day, not an hour passes, but they present some new appearance. Each shifting cloud brings out some new angle of the gigantic blocks; and, whether the rosy tints of dawn warm their steep sullen brows, or the glare of noon settles on their round summits, and tries to pierce the deep ravines which block them out from each other, or sunset, with its mellow hues, lingers among the long grass which

paints their "umbered face," where they first swell from the plain,—to me they are always lovely, grand, and peculiar. I ascended one of them, accompanied by an officer on horseback, the other day, by winding up a ravine in the rear, which brought us on a round, bold, grassy height, about one hundred feet above the prairie; to which the bluff descended by two sheer precipices of rock, of about a hundred feet each, with alternate slopes of soil, covered with long yellow grass—the whole having the appearance of some vast fortress—an enormous bastion thrown up in huge layers of earth and stone. On the very summit was one of those ancient fortifications, the mysterious mementoes of an unknown race, whose gigantic and enduring works are scattered over thousands of leagues of this continent, to puzzle the curious and set at naught the surmises of the antiquarian.* I trod each winding of the turf-covered rampart, and counted what appeared to be the embrasures for artillery, as my military friend commented upon the position, and described a number of similar remains which he had examined in different parts of the Western country: While we alike dissented with the unsatisfactory conclusions of those closet theorists who would attribute the

* See note B.

fortified appearances of this tall elevation,—the enormous mounds in the vicinity of St. Louis,—the sunken remains on the alluvial bottoms of Illinois,—the perfect forms which give its name to Circleville in Ohio, and the deep intrenchments which channel the rocky hills of eastern Kentucky, alike to the action of water: suppositions upon a par for ingenuity with those which account for the existence of the prairies by the sudden withdrawal of the same element from what was formerly the beds of a chain of vast inland lakes. The same prairies, in every instance that I have yet seen, except the single one of Prairie du Chien, being high table-land, some sixty or a hundred feet above the streams and groves which occasionally checker them. I forget whether I have before mentioned that the Indian name for prairie (scutay), which means also *fire*, would account for their origin with any one who had had an opportunity of observing how the action of that element extends these grassy domains every season in one direction, while it leaves them to shoot up into a luxuriant growth of young forest in another.

But turn with me to yonder view of the Mississippi, where a hundred wooded islets of every possible form repose upon the glistening ice that

silvers its broad bosom. How grandly does the bold promontory of "Pike's Hill," interlocked as it seems with the gray crags of the Ouisconsin, shut in the lordly stream on the south; and there, where the blue water has broken its white fetters, and those diminutive figures are leaping from one ice-cake to another, as they sparkle in the sun along the smooth eastern shore, how beautifully the tall brown grass bends over the pebbly margin! You may look now, though it is two miles off, into the very centre of Fort Crawford, where the gleam of arms flashing over the sanded parade tells of troops in motion, though the sound of their drums can hardly reach your ears. What a point would this be from which to view the meeting of hostile forces! The armies of Europe might manœuvre on the smooth prairie below, and not a guide could indicate a position without its being manifest to your eye long before a battalion could attain it.

There are a great many high-bred dogs kept at this place,—shooting and hunting of all kinds, as I have mentioned, forming the chief amusements of the officers of the post. Indeed, if an enumeration of the setters, greyhounds, and Newfoundlands, which are severally kept for grouse, wolves, and ducks, were made, without counting the curs and

Indian dogs kept by the gumboes and Indians around, the place, as I have heard it observed, might rather be called Prairie *des* Chiens, than left, as at present, in the singular number. A very successful experiment has been made here in crossing the greyhound and Newfoundland; the offspring, I am told, being highly sagacious, and a match for a full-grown bear. If the race be continued, they ought to be dubbed elkhounds, from their adaptability to the pursuit of that fine game, which abounds over the river. I was on a wolf-hunt by moonlight several hours before dawn a few mornings since; and though we were not fortunate enough to start any game, I, for my own part, had a very good chase. Among the other dogs of the pack was a greyhound of the wolf species, a breed which Sir Walter Scott says is so rare in the British dominions that I had no idea there was one of the blood on our continent. This long-haired rascal I mistook, by the doubtful light of the moon, for a real wolf; and my horse, the hero of a hundred wolf-hunts—(if I am not mistaken, he has been honourably mentioned in the Sporting Magazine),—seemed to share the blunder. I came upon the dog suddenly in some long grass, and spurring upon him, he made at once for the bluff on the other side of the plain, thinking, doubtless, from

the eager bounds of my horse that there was game in view. Convinced of my good fortune, from the course he took, I shouted to my companions, while the rest of the pack broke out into full cry, and away we went together. We ran more than a mile before the experienced nag I rode seemed to discover the blunder, and checked his gait. The officers, after enjoying a tolerable laugh at my expense, relieved my chagrin by mentioning that the same dog had several times narrowly escaped being shot by some of the oldest hunters of the country, who, in broad day, had, as they expressed it, "mistrusted him for some wild varmint."

I have amused myself somewhat here in studying the Indian languages, though I cannot say with much industry; the amount of my exertions consisting in learning some eight or ten phrases in the morning, and then strolling off to repeat them in the afternoon at the straggling lodges which may be found within a mile of the garrison. To one of these, where an old Menomone squaw was making a pair of embroidered moccasins for me, I went last night several hours after nightfall. The wigwam was formed of mats of woven rushes, subtended around a frame-work of osiers, in the form of a hemisphere, with an opening at the top, to let out the smoke. Approaching this primitive abode, I

heard the shrill voice of the hag within in what sounded like high altercation with some one who answered in a different language from herself; and, raising the dirty blanket which formed a door, while I crawled on all-fours within the low threshold, I found that the lady of the castle was only gambling amicably with an old Winnebago Indian, who sat cross-legged on a mat opposite to her. A finger-ring belonging to the squaw lay upon the mat between them, and they were trying which of the two could throw the scalping-knife of the Indian most often within the golden circle; a score being in the mean time kept by each on the edge of the mat, where sundry marks, made with a dead coal, supplied the place of the ordinary pearl-counters used by card-players. The squaw briefly answered my inquiries about the moccasins, while I raked the embers of her fire together and dried my boots by its cheerful blaze; and then, while she tossed the long elf-locks from her high cheek-bones, and the upper part of her loosely-arrayed person swept the ground while bending low to view the mark of the knife which gleamed aloft in her shrivelled hand, I glanced from her weird features and squat-form to the calm but piercing ken and still erect figure of her savage companion; and raising the blanket, left them once more alone together.

Let me conclude this letter by furnishing you with an Indian serenade, which you are at liberty to consider genuine or not: it is written in a sort of Lingua-França, or mongrel tongue, much used on the frontier, made up of words taken alike from the Ottawa and Ojiboai or Chippewa,* and possibly other languages.

* The Chippewa tongue, as is elsewhere remarked, is the common medium of communication between the whites and Indians on this part of our extensive frontier. The Chippewa, or Ojibboai, (or *Ojibbeway*, as written by Mr. Schoolcraft and Dr. James of the army, to whom, with the venerable Mr. Duponceau, the world is so much indebted for the light which their researches have thrown upon Indian customs and language), is generally considered the *court language* of our North-western tribes. The Ottawa, Pattowattamie, &c., being apparently only dialects of the same, and the Ojibboai being readily acquired by all the neighbouring tribes.

With regard to the verses above given, the original copy, furnished the writer by a young officer having been mislaid, he has found it impossible to supply the loss in time to correct the proof-sheet without seriously retarding the progress of the work through the press. The reader who is curious in such matters is referred to Schoolcraft's Travels for some interesting observations, accompanied by authentic translations, attesting the existence of imaginative tales and oral poetry among our native tribes. In Mackenzie's Tour to the Lakes there is also a song given, with the music of an original air annexed.

The above collection of sentences, which is rather offered as a specimen of Indian phraseology than as a complete and authentic production of the aboriginal muse, is meant to be pronounced exactly as the words are written. The following, in which the French pronunciation is given to the letters, will be

From the manner in which it was taken down, I do not hold myself answerable for its correctness; but, uncouth and jaw-breaking as the words may look upon paper, they really sound musical from the silver tongue of an Indian girl.

INDIAN SERENADE.

Onaiweh! Paikesai meteequen, quonadhj cuskonosd muscotaiwenin.

Awake! flower of the forest; beautiful bird of the prairie.

Onaiweh! Onaiweh! kepahshoshe moscaishecon.

Awake! awake! thou with the eyes of the fawn.

Taupai kaisainopemayan, mannenatuk azhenah pahkesaikew taupai cotainen ai won.

---

found perhaps more satisfactory. It is the Lord's Prayer, in Chippewa:—

"Cau-ci-nâne au-wei-nène iche-pi-mine-ga ein-date, mâ-nauti echi-wâ-beute wâ--i-chi-wâu-bi-tau-i-eune. Câ-ta-pâ-piche gineda-gime, mâ-nau-bige na-gâ-eune na-gâ-meuke sa-ni-goque; mi-gi-chi-nan-ga câ-mi-gi-âne nâne-goume gui-gi-keute, mi-gi-ché-nan-ga au-mei-zi-nâ-wau-mau-nan-ga eigi-cau-ti-bâmâ-tineque, cai-gau i-gi-wi-gise gi-can-gaine mia mi-a-na-teuke keunni-wâ-nau mi-che-nan-ga mi-a-nâ-touke, na-gâ-ni-zitetei-bè-nimeute, gai-â-meiche-câ-i-zite câ-gui-nique."

The following literal translation of the above is given in the Appendix of "Tanner's Narrative," by the accomplished editor of that work:—

"Our Father who above liveth, what you wish to be done, let it be done; let us not play with thy name; let thy great power come. Give us our food this day—give us our debts as we give our debtors—do not lead us into bad things—keep us from bad things—power belongs to thee and strength—For ever."

When you look at me, I am happy; like the flowers when they feel the dew.

Nodin keokeneta waikon azhenah menoqut paike saiwen oskenega kezhecut—waikon azhenah menoquten pahwepemukkazho nahgoosing.

The breath of thy mouth is as sweet as the fragrance of flowers in the morning; sweet as their fragrance at evening in the moon of the fading leaf.

Nekaugewahnahtahsee neshainonen ahchewaukee, azhenah mokkeetchewun kezhis ahchew au wahseekoseekazho?

Does not the blood of my veins spring towards thee like the bubbling springs to the sun in the moon of the bright nights? (April.)

Nemeetah nuggahmo taupai keeshiah payshoo azhenah oskenoga metecquen weneemenin nodin otaihaiminkazho.

My heart sings to thee when thou art near; like the dancing branches to the wind in the moon of strawberries. (June.)

Taupai niscaudizze saugittewun, nemeetah muccuddauwah azhenah wahbiskah sebewun taupai nahcut endosh wainje ishpeming.

When thou art not pleased, my beloved, my heart is darkened like the shining river when shadows fall from the clouds above.

Ketiyahnim geozhetone menoanedum, nemeetah sunnuggezewin azhenah kezhis geozhetone azhenah azauwahshoneah tegowugainse kissenah nodin wainjenetahhahwajink.

Thy smiles cause my troubled heart to be brightened as the sun makes to look like gold the ripples which the cold wind has created.

Neahwena, wahhundummo, keshainon nemeetah pokkaumenin.

Myself! behold me! blood of my beating heart.

Ah ke tahyahnin, nepeesh tahyahnim, ishpeming tahyahnim—kooshah nenah—Nenah kaukekendun mekunnuh tahyahnah mokeshee taupai kaukeeshiah—Onaiweh! Onaiweh! nenah saugittewun!

The earth smiles—the waters smile—the heavens smile, but I—I lose the way of smiling when thou art not near—awake! awake! my beloved.

This literal prose translation seems very bald, but I don't know that I have bettered it in the following versification.

Fairest of Flowers, by fountain or lake,
Listen, my Fawn-eyed-one, wake, oh! awake.
Pride of the prairies, one look from thy bower
Will gladden my spirit, like dew-drop the flower.

Thy glances to music my soul can attune,
As sweet as the murmur of young leaves in June:
Then breathe but a whisper, from lips that disclose
A balm like the morning, or autumn's last rose.

My pulses leap toward thee, like fountains when first
Through their ice-chains in April toward Heaven they burst.
Then, fairest of flowers, by forest or lake,
Listen, my Fawn-eyed-one, wake, oh, awake!

Like this star-paven water when clouds o'er it lower,
If thou frownest, belov'd, is my soul in that hour;
But when Heaven and Thou, love, your smiles will unfold,
If their current be ruffled, its ripples are gold.

Awake, love! all Nature is smiling, yet I—
I cannot smile, dearest, when Thou art not by.
Look from thy bower, then—here on the lake,
Pulse-of-my-beating-heart—Wake, oh! Awake!

LETTER XXIV.

Ouisconsin Territory, Feb. 18, 1834.

I hardly know whence to date this letter, unless it be from the sources of the Sinsinnaway, between Prairie du Chien and Galena. I left Prairie du Chien in a furious squall of snow, which, violent as it was, however, could not effect the politeness of the young officer, who insisted upon driving me six or seven miles, to the banks of the Ouisconsin* in a cariole. A gentleman who fills a civil station of some importance on the frontier was waiting for me at the crossing-place, where several squaws, with immense packs, sustained, after the usual Indian fashion of carrying burthens, by a band around the forehead, collected with two or three Frenchmen and half-breeds under a shed appertaining to a large stone mansion on the immediate bank of the river, gave to the place the appearance of an extensive trading establishment. Entering the house for a moment, I found two rather pretty and very well dressed young girls of sixteen or eighteen,

* See note C.

whose raven locks and eyes of jet alone proclaimed their half-blood origin. One of the ladies sketched (they had been educated either at Detroit or St. Louis), and we had just got into a discussion upon the plates of a new English annual which she had in her hands, when a call from without compelled me at once to bid my friend farewell, and leave him the agreeable task of entertaining the backwood beauties by himself. I have at different places on the frontier seen some of these half-breed fair ones, the piquancy of whose charms would excite no slight sensation in the gay circles of the Atlantic States. But, like the full-blooded Indian females, they lose their beauty very soon; like them, too, when faded, they exhibit a harshness of feature which is almost forbidding. An aged Indian has often something interesting and even attractive in his countenance; but an aged squaw, or one even in whose face the light of youth no longer lingers, is any thing but prepossessing—is even haggish. It is to this frail and fleeting condition of their charms that the early desertion of their husbands, whether red or white, is chiefly to be attributed: for the affection, the fondness, the devotedness of an Indian girl to her lover know no bounds, and her truth is beyond impeachment. In the strange intermixture of popu-

lation on the frontiers, these qualities are of course oftener and more severely tried than in those distant wilds where the Indian still roves free from the perilous influence of the white man, untaught in those principles of morality which are made to depend upon degrees of latitude and longitude, and unskilled in that system of dealing which takes its colour of fairness according to the blood of the person dealt with. I have said, that though their features are not often regular, there is at times something very attractive, even to piquancy, about them. You would think so, I know, could you see one that I have in "my mind's eye" at this moment.

I have fallen in with so many straggling parties and broken bands of different tribes upon the borders, between Detroit and Prairie du Chien, that it matters not to say at what point I had an opportunity of studying the large dark and eloquent eyes that beam in swimming lustre before me. The straight forehead is, perhaps, a thought too low; and yet, while those tresses, dark as night, are gathered so far away from its broad polished surface, it were too masculine if an atom higher. I said her features were not regular; the nose is too *retroussé* for a sculptor's model, yet

never did his chisel set that feature with more beautiful distinctness, between a pair of clear and pencilled brows. How much of manhood's force and woman's fondness dwells around that mouth! and when its dewy portals disclose teeth whiter than "snow upon a raven's wing," one need not be a Mahometan to fancy Houri's lips like those. But what shall I say of her figure? It is too much below the standard height to create a sensation in a ball-room; and the untrained waist, were it not for the plump though falling shoulders, and full outline above, would not appear too slender to dispense with some of Mrs. Cantello's discipline: yet such a form would Hebe choose, should she roam the world for a new tenement to dwell in.

To repeat the unspeakable and ludicrously expressive name of this Indian beauty would destroy any interest this attempt at describing her may have created; and I am half disposed to steal the finely appropriate name of a Menomone belle, strongly resembling her, who is called *Mokeechéwon*, or "The Bubbling Spring."

But I am too long a truant from my fellow-traveller. We descended the steep bluff together, and got upon the now frail ice of the Ouisconsin, by means of poles and pieces of loose timber thrown

out from the shore, while we slid our baggage upon a smooth board over a broad opening near the margin of the rapid current. Once on the main body of the ice, I was dragged over in a traineau by Indians, while a Canadian or two went ahead with long poles to try the ice; and then on reaching the opposite shore, the same ceremonies being repeated, we after some delay made good our landing. A tall rickety old barouche (I should as soon think of driving an ox-cart into my bedroom, as bringing such a machine among these hills at this season) stood waiting for us in a frozen swamp; after stowing our baggage, and making the crank craft shorten sail by lowering the leathern top, we got fairly under way. We had not gone a mile before the swingle-tree broke, while crossing a brisk stream, and our driver having repaired the difficulty after an hour's delay in a heavy snow storm, by cutting a piece of wood with his knife from a grove at hand, we started a-fresh, and reached the foot of the bluff by which you first descend into the valley of the Ouisconsin, at about three o'clock. The ascent—perhaps two hundred feet high—was in two pitches, either of which, on a summer's day, would trouble a man to walk up, who wanted wind and a firm tread. They were now covered with fresh snow, having an underlayer of smooth

ice, created by the previous thaw, and the office of our two half-starved horses in getting up the old barouche, you may readily imagine, was no sinecure. The driver (from my own State) was a forward, two-third witted fellow, grafting the impudence of a New-York hackney coachman upon the not disagreeable freedom of Western character. His head was coated with a mass of hair, which curled so tight as to keep his eyes always open on the stare, while it was lined with an accumulation of conceit that actually puffed out his cheeks; yet he was bold, active, and, notwithstanding his disagreeable familiarity, meant well. His two nags (which looked like frames of that interesting quadruped the horse, set up for further finishing), he honestly believed, with Goldfinch, were "equal to any pair of tits that ever touched harness;" and therefore treated our suggestion that they would not be able to make good their footing to the top of the hill with just disdain. Like Bonaparte, however, he paused to harangue his forces before scaling the Alps; "Now, you Doctor, be careful how you tread, you infernal villain—and, Fanny, you know better, you hussy, than to let the Doctor be always a dragging you his side the road—now go ahead, G—d d—n you!" This pithy address seemed to be as well under-

stood by the sagacious brutes as if our friend had spoken in the Hounhym language, like Gulliver himself. The learned M.D. and the gentle Fanny gave such a violent start, that, what with our pushing behind the vehicle and our conductor's urging them on with an enormous ox-goad before, the first ascent was, with much floundering, soon made good: but they could no more. Like Saunders Supplejaw in Quentin Durward, "there they stuck." They did indeed make little excursions up the side of the hill, but it was only to slip back to the same place. Nor did I wonder at it. I was obliged myself to climb the slippery steep on my hands and knees, at the risk of having my neck broken by the floundering horses, who once nearly gained the top, when their footing giving way, they came tumbling down, carriage and all, jumbled together like the picture of Phaeton's mishap in the school edition of Tooke's Pantheon. In this last attempt they fortunately broke the carriage, or we might have cooled our heels on the spot till midnight.

In the existing wreck of matter, however, we determined at once to mount the two horses bareback, while our conductor should try and keep up with us on foot till we gained the house of a settler some six or seven miles off, and could send back a

conveyance for our baggage. The horses being with some difficulty led up the hill, our conductor began at once to try the strength of his legs, by kicking the poor brutes in their ribs,—an application which the Doctor took with as much quiet as if he felt that he deserved it for his malpractice. The gentle Fanny, however, seemed determined to show her humane master, that, however he might excel her in the use of the whip, she was more than a match for him when it came to a flourish of heels; and accordingly, she handled her hoofs with such dexterity that one of them descended so plumply upon the epigastrum of the offending conductor as nearly to drive the breath out of his body. He recoiled a few paces in the snow, but did not seem the least hurt, while I mounted his assailant before another round could be had between the combatants; and my companion taking the other horse, we all pushed off together as fast as we could from the scene of our misfortunes. Commend me to an afternoon's canter on the back of a broadsword, but never let my limbs cross the naked chine of such a beast again in a trot of six miles. My companion soon dismounted and yielded his place to the driver, who clung to the bed of down the rest of the route, twisting and turning the whiles thereon at a rate that made the

wolves—of which we passed several—stop and stare at him, as if he had had the St. Vitus's dance.

The cabin at which we stopped belonged to an emigrant originally from New-Hampshire, but now for fifteen years a rover in the West. From his present residence he had been several times driven off by the Indians, and of course, like most of the settlers, hated them cordially. He had two or three loaded rifles suspended by wooden hooks over his fireplace; and assigned to me as a reason for keeping them always thus ready, "that he was a lone man, and didn't want any rascally Indian to come snooping for hogs about his place." —"Surely, sir," I observed, "you would not shoot them unless they did you mischief?"—"Why, I don't say as to that, stranger, but the varmint give us a heap of trouble; and I'd rather for their own sakes that none of their rifles would come cracking about my door."—"Well, I always get rid of the red devils," pursued an old backwoodsman standing by, "without shooting any on them; and its only by catching two that came hunting near me last spring, and making them understand that they run a smart chance for their lives if they ever come within rifle-shot of my cornfield again. Government's bought their land, and it's wrong for them to be cavorting round quiet people's houses any

more." Contrast such views and feelings with the hospitable conduct towards the Indians of recent settlers from your own State, which I have commemorated in former letters, and you will for the moment feel a glow of pride for the generous dealings of the New-York emigrant. Examine the subject deeper, and that just pride will not be diminished, but you will at least have charity for the startling creed of the old backwoodsman.

The cause of the existing hatred of many of the old borderers of the very name of Indian must be sought for far back in the bloody annals of our frontiers. Its origin may there be found in the fierce collisions, the midnight burnings, the massacres, and cruel devastations which are familiar to us in a thousand tales of our infancy. The bitter feelings, the recollection of wrongs committed or incurred—of vengeance wreaked or reaped in these desperate scenes,—have lived for generations in the families of their daring and much-enduring actors. In the solitary life of a frontier man, so far removed from the ordinary objects which engage the thoughts of men of his class in thickly settled parts of the country, they form his chief subject for reflection, when roving the forest, or labouring alone in the field by day; and they are the theme upon which he descants

when his young offspring gather around their humble hearth by night. His children drink in the black story with all the greediness of infant ears; and when, wishing for the detail of further horrors, they are placed perforce by their mother on their pallet of straw, she stills their cries by whispering the name of some dreaded chieftain in their ears—as I have more than once myself heard the name of Black Hawk used to still the murmurs of a nursling. The lessons thus taught are ineradicable, while the accumulated passions and prejudices of generations are transmitted and kept alive. A peculiar class of men is thus created, or rather was created years and years ago,—a class of men as distinct in many respects from the more happily situated inhabitants of countries sheltered by the strong arm of the law, as if it had its birth in another planet; and the chief characteristic of its members is (I do not speak ironically), that they have two consciences—one for the white and another for the red man. You smile incredulously at such an anomaly in morals; but however paradoxical it may appear upon paper, it is a fact as notorious as the open day, that there have been and are men on the frontiers whose dealings with civilized society, whose general humanity, whose exact attendance even to their religious duties, are

such as to ensure them respect, if not to give them weight, in any well-ordered community,—and that with these very men the rights and privileges, the property, the life of an Indian, do not weigh a feather. For some most remarkable and deeply interesting facts in relation to this strange incongruity of disposition, I refer you to several admirable articles on frontier life and "Indian-hating," in the back numbers of Judge Hall's Western Magazine.*

Now this is the class—bold, enterprising, and hardy, true to each other, and just and hospitable to the white stranger, but having no place in their system of doing good for the unfriended Indian,—which, since the earliest settlement of the back

* If I am not very much mistaken, the records of the criminal court in the county of Montgomery, State of New-York, will supply some facts in relation to Indian-hating nearer home. I think it was only October, 1833, that I saw a statement in a Johnstown newspaper in relation to an Indian murder committed by an old man of sixty, who had been in past years tried and acquitted by Mohawk juries, several times, upon different indictments for Indian murders. He destroyed his victim, whom he had never seen till that moment, by picking him off with his rifle, while fishing in his canoe between two white men. With regard to the murderer it was said, that, like Logan, not a drop of his blood ran in the veins of any living creature. His kindred had been cut off by the Indians while he was yet a child.

countries, have been brought continually in contact with the original possessors of the soil. They alone are the real pioneers. Wave after wave of western immigration has rolled from our cultivated coast over the Alleghanies and the Mississippi; but while each shot beyond its predecessor, and left it settling far behind, it has only thrust in advance, it has never absorbed, or commingled with, the distinct and narrow currents that first led the way. These pioneers do indeed continually penetrate beyond the immediate Indian boundaries, and there, as is the case in the peninsula of Michigan, you may see the hereditary enemies they have left behind living upon the kindest terms with the new white population that succeeds, until their land becomes so valuable as to be coveted by their neighbours, when government steps in and removes them once more to struggle with their old enemies beyond the border. Driven from his favourite hunting-grounds—torn from the graves of his fathers—for which he has a sacred and almost passionate veneration—the poor Indian goes forth to dwell among a strange and often a hostile people, with whom his dismembered and broken tribe soon passes into a by-word. There, generally, the terms he is upon with the scattered pioneers that have reached even that remote place be-

fore him, preclude him from a market for his venison and skins in his immediate neighbourhood; and if he does not take to shooting his white neighbours' hogs, and get brought down himself by a rifle-ball in return, he wanders off to some distant trading-post, where he runs himself incurably in debt by taking at credit the articles necessary for his subsistence, at a thousand per cent. above their market value. Here he learns from the Scotch and English trader to love the *Saginash** and hate the *Chemocomon;*† to go with the various tribes within our borders which the British government at this moment religiously keep in their pay, to receive arms and presents at Malden: and to hold himself ready to join the first marauding party of his red brethren which shall raise the warwhoop on the border, and add new venom to the deadly feud of the pioneer. Sometimes, indeed, he becomes a dealer in small peltries on his own account, and annually visits the home of his childhood, where some thriving village has in the mean time sprung up, to dispose of the fruits of the chase, and get his supply of little necessaries in return. Several instances of the last were mentioned to me at the pretty hamlets of Ottawa and Hennepin, on the Illinois, where I was

* Englishman. † American.

told that the storekeepers dealt with different Indians, whom they had repeatedly trusted to the amount of several hundred dollars for the term of a year, without their confidence being ever abused. But the Indian returning hence to his wildwood haunts still, in passing the frontier, avoids the beings between whom and himself there is such a fearful account of mutual wrong and injury left unbalanced; and if he lies down at night beneath the shelter of a white man's roof, it is one that covers the family of some new wanderer to the West, to whom the wild deeds of frontier-life are only known through the softened medium of fiction, as a tale of other days. But much more likely is he, if his blanket alone be not his bed, to betake himself to some tenantless mansion, where the charred shell of what was formerly the family dwelling of a once happy but now desolated pioneer blackens the lonely heath. Here, while the prairie blast whistles through the gaping timbers, the Indian, crouched upon the floor where the feet of his red brothers have slipped in the blood their ruthless hands have shed, may well be supposed to exult in the demoniac feelings of gratified revenge, so dear to his race,—to brood through the hours of midnight over the accumulated wrongs under which he believes himself to be suffering, and to

emerge from his gloomy lair in the morning eager for an encounter that may relieve his swollen feelings. Imagine now the white man, who once thought himself the possessor of that spot;—he, the ruined parent of that shattered home, hanging around the only remains of all that was dear to him! and then conceive what would be the meeting of two such beings. There is not another touch required to the picture; and yet it is no picture,—it is reality. The deserted dwellings I have seen again and again. The stories connected with them are so familiar in their neighbourhood as to be told without emotion. The state of feeling they keep alive among the whites I have already explained. The isolated condition of the Indian is, alas! too well known.

But enough of this for the present; when I have delivered the letters which I have for individuals high in the Indian department farther down the country, you shall have my own crude notions in relation to our national policy towards this singular people.

Having recovered our baggage, I started with my fellow-traveller at about ten o'clock the next morning, in a jumper, trusting to his knowledge of the different groves, which are the landmarks of the prairies, for finding our way to a neighbour's,

between thirty or forty miles off. We had proceeded a very few miles, when, every sign of a trail being covered with snow, we became completely lost, and wandered over the prairie for eleven hours; sometimes, indeed, we would get a snatch of a track where the snow had drifted it bare, but a few moments afterward we would be driving just as much at random as ever. The night at last closed in extremely cold, and the wind swept over the prairie so piercingly, that the very wolves seemed to shiver as they stood looking at us in the bright moonlight—(the number and impudence of these rascals on the prairies is almost incredible)—but the glorious sky above us seemed to lend some of its influence to our spirits; and, so long as our poor horse held out, we determined to keep on. His strength, however, began to be too much tried as we passed along the mouth of a number of ravines scooped out of the prairie, and descended occasionally into the groves that filled them, to see if we could discover a house. The wearied brute seemed so loath to leave the last one we entered, that, after pausing and hallooing in vain for some time, I proposed that we should turn him loose to browse on the trees, and, making a fire, lie down in the snow for the night. My friend preferred trying one more ravine for the house, as we were

both very sharp set; and starting anew to take a short cut up the hill-side, we came to the brink of a narrow and deep gully, which my companion got out to examine. "Jump him over," he cried.

"Jump the devil!—the horse can hardly step."

"Try him."

"He'll break the jumper."

"Then we'll 'camp upon the spot."

The grove echoed with a single application I made with a flat stick to the poor brute's back, and the flying car (emphatically a *jumper*) landed safely with me in it on the other side of the gully. We gained the open prairie once more—heard the bark of a watch-dog—and, descending another ravine, were comfortably housed, an hour before midnight, in the log-dwelling of a miner.

LETTER XXV.

Galena, Upper Mississippi, February 22d.

When I came to look round, in the morning, at the place where you last left me so fortunately accommodated, I found that our host, an enterprising Kentuckian, had been very fortunate in his choice of a location: it was a rocky and, as I was assured, healthful dell, about a hundred feet below the surrounding prairie, abounding in lead-ore, and having a fine stream, with a considerable cascade, winding through its wooded bosom. His house was situated among a clump of ashes and elms, and near it a crystal spring burst from beneath an ancient sycamore, in what resembled a torrent rather than an ordinary fountain of water; making altogether what in summer must be a most delicious retreat, and affording even in winter a very agreeable change from the windy prairie above. Inviting, however, as it appeared, this sequestered spot had some features of a sinister aspect. Within a few hundred yards of this apparently peaceful dwelling, stood a strong block-house on the open

prairie; a refuge for the family in time of danger; preventing, by its naked position, the secret approach of a lurking foe. Passing this block-house, after an early breakfast, we struck a track leading to the Platte Mounds, which were distinctly visible, rearing their blue peaks in the morning air. Our route lay through a beautiful country of mingled grove and prairie, where large herds of deer were occasionally to be seen roving about, at several miles distance. Frequently, in places where there were no other traces of man, we came to trenches opened by miners, who had either abandoned them in search of more promising veins of ore, or had been driven away by the Indians. These trenches bear exactly the appearance of a grave, and are about the same size; and you sometimes meet with hundreds of them in the course of a few miles' ride: for the high price of lead, before the Winnebago difficulties of 1828, attracted a vast number of adventurers to this region, who have since abandoned it for the mineral districts of Missouri.

We came at length to a place where two miners were sinking a shaft on the prairie; and as there was a windlass at work over the aperture, I prevailed on my companion to wait until I should descend. I was let down by the rope in a few

moments, and passing through an upper crust of rich soil, at least three feet thick, a stratum of gravel succeeded, and then coming down to the clay, I found a solitary miner with his pick at work upon a vein of lead-ore. "Halloo, stranger!" he cried, as dangling midway I darkened the only opening by which he could receive light; "where the devil do you come from?" —"From the State of New-York," I answered, alighting on a big lump of lead-ore near him. "Well, I'm from the State of Maine," replied he, laughing; "and I'm glad to see any one from so near home." I could not but smile to think how distant places on the Atlantic border approach each other, when viewed from this remote spot. I shook hands with my near neighbour of Maine, pocketed two or three specimens of ore which he struck out for me, and giving a signal with the rope to those above at the windlass, my resurrection to daylight was effected in a few moments.

We arrived at the Platte Mounds in the course of the afternoon; but it was late on the fourth day from Prairie du Chien when we reached Galena. Here I have been sorry to lose my late agreeable fellow-traveller; and a fresh thaw having laid an embargo upon travelling by melting the snow, and

rendering the streams impassable, I have endeavoured to occupy my time in looking about Galena. The mud is so deep that it is impossible to go afoot; and as these steep hills are unfit for carriages, the children going and returning from school pass the door of my lodgings, on horseback, every morning and evening; three or four boys and girls sometimes being piled on before and behind an old negro, till the mass of heads, arms, and legs, belonging to the juveniles, makes the fabric look like the wood-cut in the nursery-book of that celebrated ancient female's residence, who "had so many children she did not know what to do."

The population of Galena is about 1000, and that of Jo-Davies's county, in which it is situated, is computed at 5000; a very large proportion of which is engaged in mining operations. The town, for its size, is one of the busiest places in the Union. The value of goods imported into this place last season amounted to $150,000; the exports of lead amounted to seven millions of pounds, at $4 50 per hundredweight. There were ninety-six departures and ninety-seven arrivals of steamboats during the last season; three of which were owned by persons engaged directly in the trade. This, for a frontier-town, built indifferently of frame and log-houses, thrown confusedly together on the side of a hill,

is certainly doing very well. People now hold their property by a somewhat precarious tenure, which prevents them from making improvements. When government gives them title-deeds to the lands they occupy, both Galena and the adjacent country will assume a very different appearance.

I took quite an extensive ride in the neighbourhood yesterday. There was to be a public meeting of the miners and other residents, held about twelve or fifteen miles from town, upon the subject of petitioning Congress in relation to the sale of lands; and having procured a tolerable saddle-horse, I started with Colonel H.,—whose family-name is already known among the very first in our history, and whose acknowledged talents and influence in this quarter will ensure his making a figure in public life, when the new State of Ouisconsin shall take her place in the confederacy.*

* A period much less remote than many would think it. The country between Rock River and the Ouisconsin combines perhaps more advantages for emigration than any described in the whole of this tour. That lying between the Fox River and Lake Michigan is represented as being equally good; and, supposing the Indian difficulties to be now for ever terminated in this quarter, this region will fill with northern emigrants the moment it becomes known. A glance at the map will show how favourably it is situated for trade, commanding the markets alike of Buffalo and New-Orleans.

But a few years have elapsed since he left the city of New-York, a mere youth, to try his fortune in the West,—since then he has followed at different times the various occupations of a lawyer, a drover, a miner, and lastly a smelter, besides taking an active part in two Indian wars, where his early West Point education came favourably into play. Colonel H. is, perhaps, second only to General Dodge in knowledge of frontier-affairs, and popularity with the backwoodsmen in this quarter.

I cannot give you a better idea of the thoroughly democratic state of society here, than by repeating the whimsical conversation in which I first became aware of this gentleman's being a resident of these parts.

"I allow that you know Colonel H. of your city?" asked a sturdy borderer and thriving farmer of me, a few weeks since, while in the lower country.

"Colonel H., the son of General H.? certainly I do: why, what in the world brought him out here at this season? You must be mistaken, my dear sir; the duties of his office, as U. S. district attorney, would hardly allow him to take such a tour as this."

"*Tower*, stranger! why he's living among us."

"Here?"

"No, not exactly on this prairie, but in the mines. The colonel took a drove of hogs up for me, some time since."

"My dear friend," replied I, laughing heartily at the very idea, "Colonel H. would see you to the devil first, before he'd take ten steps after a drove of hogs, for you or any one else."

"By G—d, sir," rejoined the backwoodsman, with some excitement, "you don't know little Bill; for though he *is* the son of General H., and the smartest man in all these parts to boot, he has none of y'r d—d foolish pride about him; but would just as soon drive any honest man's hogs over the prairie as his own."

"Certainly, sir, the Colonel H. that I mean would just as soon drive your hogs as he would his own; but I now perceive that your 'little Bill' is a very different person from the one I allude to: yet no one could admire the independence of character you ascribe to him more than I do."

"Squire, give us your hand! you and little Bill must know each other before you leave this country."

I had an opportunity of hearing Mr. H. address a public meeting on the evening of my arrival in Galena, and was much struck with the logical pre-

cision and force with which he spoke; and with his fluency, clear enunciation, and thorough command of himself and his audience. His features, when animated in speaking, bore a striking resemblance to those of his great and lamented father, as exhibited in the plaster casts which are familiar to every one.

"Colonel H.," said the gentleman who introduced me, "is at present disguised in a suit of broadcloth; to have him in character, sir, you should see him in his leather shirt and drawers, driving his ox-team with a load of lead into town." Mr. H. laughed in reply, and our horses being ready, we mounted, and soon escaping from the muddy town, found topics enough for conversation while galloping through the oak openings on the hills beyond. The gathering proved to be not so numerous, when we arrived at the place of meeting, as I had hoped; and, though in the grouping of wild-looking figures, with their variety of strange faces and striking costumes, Inman's bold pencil might have found some fine studies, yet I was wholly disappointed in any outlandish exhibitions of character. They were, in fact, as civil and well-behaved a set as would come to the call of a committee in any of the best-inhabited wards in your city. Their

civility to me, indeed—being a stranger—could not be exceeded; I never approached the fire, but two or three rose to offer me a seat; and scarcely one of the company called for any thing to drink, but, turning round, he would add, "Stranger, won't you join us?" As we spent several hours among them merely talking and moving round, without getting up any formal meeting, I had ample leisure to study the different appearances of the company, as some bent over a card-table, where the pieces of dirty pasteboard were rapidly compelling the small piles of money collected there to change hands; while others lay stretched in the sun upon the wood-pile before the open door, listlessly whittling a piece of stick with their long hunting-knives. One of the most striking figures was a tall young man of about seven or eight-and-twenty, whose delicate features, though somewhat imbrowned with toil and exposure, were only relieved from effeminacy by a dark beard trimmed around his oval face and depending from his chin, much in the style that Sir Walter Raleigh and Shakspeare are painted,—either of whose fine heads, his high, pale, and expressive forehead would not have misbecome. His figure, about six feet in height, was set off by a close-fitting hunting-shirt of black

buckskin, lightly embroidered on the collar and arms with straw-coloured silk, which, from long use, had grown so dingy as scarcely to be detected upon the rusty leather it was meant to adorn. Others there were with the common cotton hunting-shirt of the west belted around them. But the majority were dressed in rough blanket-coats of every possible colour; while a vest of the most costly description, with pantaloons of Kentucky jean, would often complete their incongruous apparel.

I could form a tolerable estimate of the intelligence of this collection of people, from observing the language which my new friend used in talking to them upon the subject that brought them together; and, when speaking in earnest, it was invariably such as one educated gentleman would use to another when comparing views upon any new topic of interest. Upon my commenting upon this, after we had bid them farewell, and were riding off together, my companion observed, that there were not only many strong-minded men of ordinary education who had adopted the way of life which I saw prevailing around me, but that, had I time to remain longer in that section of country, he could point out to me a number of regularly educated persons, the graduates of more

than one of our eastern colleges, who were seeking their fortunes in this region in the capacity of common miners. While he was yet speaking, we were accosted by a poorly clad and in every respect ordinary-looking person, to whom my companion replied with great politeness; and then resuming the subject after we had passed the forlorn shantee which the individual called his house, —"*Par exemple*," he exclaimed, "that man—and a shrewd, sensible fellow he is—was bred to the bar in your State; he looks poor enough now, it is true, but I hear that he has lately struck a lead, and a few years will probably find him in independent circumstances. We are now, you observe, among his diggings; and though at this moment he has hands to help him, I believe he began, like most of us, with his single pick. Clear that trench, now, and guide your horse through those pitfalls on the right, and I will take you to a point where you may see how we get up the ore."

Following my conductor along a mile or two farther of pretty rough road, we came at last to a spot where a huge mound of earth, with piles of lead-ore scattered here and there on the adjacent ground, showed that a mine was very successfully worked beneath; and giving our horses

to an accommodating fellow that stood by, we threw off our overcoats and prepared to descend into it. The orifice on the top of the mound, over which a windlass was placed, was about three feet square, being lined with split logs crossing each other at the angles down to the original surface of the soil, below which point the adhesiveness of the earth seemed to be all that kept the sides of the pit together. It was so dark, however, at this part of the passage down, that other precautions may have escaped me. Taking the rope from above in my hands, and placing my foot in a wooden hook attached to the end of it, I swung myself from the top, and in a few moments descended some seventy or eighty feet below the surface. The narrow chamber was of course excessively dark to one just coming from the light of day; and landing upon the edge of a tub immediately beneath the aperture through which I had descended, I lost my foothold and pitched head over heels in the water with which the bottom of the mine was flooded. "Any one hurt?" cried a voice behind me; and looking round as I sprang to my feet, I found myself in a long horizontal passage or narrow gallery, with a grim-looking miner approaching me with a lantern in one hand and a pickaxe in the other. The next moment the form of my companion

darkened the opening above, and then, after landing by my side, he introduced me to the miner, who proceeded to show us about these subterranean premises. They consisted of three or four galleries, generally terminating in a common centre, though one or two short ones, just commenced, appeared to run off at right angles to the rest; and the lead-ore, which glitters like frosted silver in its native bed, appeared to lie in thick horizontal strata along their side. The masses were readily separated by the pickaxe from the neighbouring clay, and we remained long enough to see several tubsful hauled up by the conveyance which had admitted us into these dusky regions. The labour and exposure of these miners is very great; but the life, to those who have an interest in the work, is said to be so exciting, that the most indolent man, when he has once fairly burrowed under ground, and got a scent of what is called "*a lead*,"* will vie in devotion to his toil with the most industrious of those who labour in the light of heaven. His stimulus, indeed, resembles that of the gold-hunter; for the lead, when delivered at Galena, is as good as coin in his pocket; while, if he chances to strike a rich *lead* of mineral, he at

* Query, LODE?—From Sax. *læden*.—Encyc.

once becomes independent,—as, if he does not choose to work it on his own account, there are houses in Galena which will purchase him out for a handsome sum, for the sake of speculation.

It was late in the evening, when, after taking this wide circuit, I once more regained my lodgings at Galena. I found the tavern entirely deserted, and upon inquiring the cause, and learning that there was "a play to be acted in town," I rode off at once to the door of the theatre. It proved to be in an unfinished building on the side of a hill, the basement of which, opening on a lower street, was a stable; and, there being no flooring to the apartment above it, one stepped over the naked beams above the horses' heads, if deviating from the plank which formed a passage-way to a rude staircase leading into the histrionic realms in the uppermost story. The company consisted of four grown persons and a child about ten years old, and the play was the melo-drama of The Woodman's Hut. A thing so easily turned into ridicule would be game not worth hunting down, and I mean, therefore, to disappoint any ill-natured expectations you may have of the picture I could give of Galena theatricals. That the rest of the audience were at least as liberal as myself, you may gather from the fact of

their showering half-dollars like peas upon the stage, to express their delight of the little girl's dancing between the acts, which certainly did not surpass that of the Vestris, not to mention Taglioni. In the midst of the performance of the melo-drama, I happened to be standing in the apartment below, when I was not a little startled at the passage of a heavy missile by my ears, which, striking fire from a beam near to where I was standing, concluded its career by giving a hearty thump to a horse who was ruminating in his stall beneath. The mystery was presently cleared up by a little negro dropping at a bound from the entrance to the Thespian hall above, and exclaiming, "Did you see a gun come by here, sir? The count went to stand it in the corner, and it slipped between the planks of the floor." I directed the imp to the realms below, and starting at once for my lodgings, had no further opportunity to study these unrehearsed stage effects.

The want of a regular theatre many will think a merit in so small a town as Galena; but there is another defect in the place, and, indeed, in almost all western towns where you get so far beyond the mountains, that is not so easily got over, and that is, the want of female society. The

number of males in proportion to females on the frontiers is at least five to one; and girls of fifteen (I might say twelve), or widows of fifty, are alike snapped up with avidity by the disconsolate bachelors. In the mines a few years since their eyes were so seldom cheered with the sight of the better part of creation, that I was told by an old borderer, "he had travelled twenty miles only to get a look at a petticoat, where it was rumoured that there was actually one in the neighbourhood." Even now they talk seriously in Galena of getting up an importation of ladies, for the especial amelioration and adornment of the place. How so delicate a matter is to be managed in our fastidious age I am unable to divine, unless, indeed, they should invite the blooming ones hither, under the ostensible purpose of getting up *a fair*, and then persuade them to remain and cheer these monastic abodes. I have been more than once feelingly appealed to to make the languishing condition of these hermits of the prairies known in more favoured parts of the country; while, not wishing to betray the slenderness of my influence with the fair parties they would concilia te I have avoided making rash promises of using my feeble offices in their favour. The only method of serving their cause I have

yet hit upon is, to have inserted in the newspapers after my arrival home, under the head of "Singular fact," "Remarkable phenomenon," "Unequalled spirit," or "Sudden disappearance," some such paragraph as this:—"It is attested by credible witnesses, among whom are some of the oldest and most respectable inhabitants of Galena, that single ladies, visiting their friends in that place, never see 'a second winter.'"

LETTER XXVI.

Peoria, Illinois, March 4th.

I have gone through a variety of amusing and some vexatious adventures in crossing the country from Galena to this central place; but you have now been with me so long upon the prairies that I shall not fatigue you by detailing more of a traveller's passing mishaps and petty encounters. The great melting of the snows that detained me at Galena was followed by a sharp frost, which, crusting over the swollen streams, made their passage very painful for the horses. In passing through the Winnebago swamp, we drove for the distance of a mile through water up to the chests of our horses, and so heavily coated with ice, that it was as much as the leaders could do to break a way with their fore feet. My fellow-traveller, however,—for I started with but one from Galena,—proved to be an old campaigner and capital travelling companion, and we managed to extract some amusement from every occurrence, however an-

noying; and whether we were jolting over the frozen ground in an open wagon, without springs or seats, or keeping the freezing night-wind away by stuffing our bed-clothes in the crevices, as we shared a pallet together in some half-constructed log-edifice, the spirit of fun and good-humour has been sympathetic between us.

About a day's journey from Galena, we passed over a reach of prairie, some twelve or fourteen miles in extent, where my companion, who is a middle-aged man, was fortunate enough, a few winters ago, to be the cause of saving a great many lives. A train of sleighs, holding more than a dozen people, among whom were several females, started immediately after breakfast to cross this narrow arm of the prairie; and though the distance was only as I have stated it, they contrived somehow to lose their way in the snow, and night closing in found them apparently as far from the house they were seeking as when they started in the morning. They had, in fact, during a sudden flurry of snow, turned completely round, and, as my companion was the first to discover, were actually going backward, instead of advancing on their route. A council was at once held, and all except my friend were for still pushing forward; though the horses were worn down with fatigue,

and several of the travellers already frost-bitten or becoming torpid with cold. But my companion, who probably had more experience in such scenes than any of the company, immediately took command and ordered a halt, declaring that he would not move a step farther, and warning them that they would perish, should they not make use of the few moments of light that were left them to secure themselves for the night. Providentially every one yielded to him. The horses were turned loose, and the snow having been removed from a large space of ground, it was forthwith covered with buffalo-skins, and the largest sleigh in the train placed inverted upon them. The whole company then, with the exception of my friend, crawled beneath the impending structure, while he remained outside and covered up the box with snow, shovelling it on with a piece of board. This exercise —which alone saved his life, while it ensured the safety of theirs—he continued till morning, when some of the horses having found their way into the settlements, the people came out and led the company to their homes. During the same spell of weather, if not on the same night, two wagoners and some oxen were frozen on the prairie, farther down the country, on a route which I have since passed. There were three of them in company,

each with a team, haling* goods to some point on the Illinois. Finding their oxen gradually becoming stiff with cold, they determined to leave them and hurry on to a house. One of the three gave out before they had gone many miles, and his companions buried him in a snow-bank; the second sank down on the road; and the third only succeeded in reaching a house and saving his life. Part of the load of these poor fellows consisted of blankets, which, had they known it, might have saved them. The incident struck me when told near the spot on a cold day, though not so much as a similar story which I heard when I first came upon the grand prairie in Indiana. It related to the fate of an emigrant who attempted to cross a broad arm of the prairie with his family, in an open wagon, on a very cold day. They were found stiff in the road, the horses frozen in their traces, and standing upright, as if petrified by some sudden influence, and the man leaning against the wagon, with a fragment torn from it in his hands, as if in the act of trying to make a fire. The mother sat erect, with an infant in her arms; but

* Pronounced *hauling:* a term universally used at the West instead of its Northern synonyme "drawing." They have Shakspeare's authority for it—"I think oxen and wainropes cannot *hale* them together."—*Twelfth Night.*

the children were curled about her feet in every position that an attempt to screen themselves from the cruel exposure could suggest. But these stories, of which I could tell you a hundred, begin now to lose their effect, as, with the gradual opening of spring, I find myself approaching a milder region. The last day's travel has led along those sunny bottoms of the Illinois, where, even at this early season, the chattering of the paroquet may be heard upon every side; and here and there I have been delighted to observe a tender green stealing over those sheltered meadows beneath the retreating banks of the river, whose narrow limits and basin-like appearance answer so completely to my preconceived ideas of a prairie. The Illinois, about thirty miles above this point, expands into a fine lake, upon the banks of which Peoria is situated. The site is one of the prettiest for a town that I ever saw, and the approach to it, through alternate prairies and richly wooded bottoms, that fringe the lake with a vegetation of stupendous growth, and give glimpses of its sparkling waters and blue islets through festoons of vines that overhang the road for miles continuously, must in summer be like a scene of fairy land.

Peoria is about the geographical centre of Illinois, though by no means as yet the centre of popu-

lation, which is still far to the south-east. This place is rapidly improving, and may very possibly become the future seat of government. It has inexhaustible quantities of bituminous coal in its vicinity, and commands an unbroken steamboat navigation with St. Louis. The adjacent country is very fertile. The soil, like that of Illinois generally, is better suited to the grazier than the agriculturist. It is composed of a black and rich mould, with a small admixture of fine silicious sand, and rests on soft and permeable clay without being interspersed with stone or gravel. This formation, as is observed by Governor Coles, in an excellent address before a scientific body in Illinois, while it is unfavourable to the existence of perennial streams and fountains, and impedes the plough of the agriculturist, and endangers his health by the creation of miasma, in the vicinity of the middle lands furnishes inexhaustible meadows to the grazier, and every facility for canals and railroads. The Illinois River was described by General G. B. Clark so long ago as 1777, as "a natural canal passing through natural meadows;" and the facility with which branches might be made as the country requires them is now very apparent. The route of the proposed canal (of which I have before spoken), to connect the waters of Lake Superior

with those of the Gulf of Mexico, by a communication of only one hundred miles, commences at a point on the Chicago River, five miles above its mouth, where the water is twelve feet deep, and on a level with Lake Michigan; thence seven miles and a half to the summit-level, which is seventeen feet above the surface of Lake Michigan, and five feet nine inches above the Des-Plaine: thence (for only a ship-canal) down the valley of the Des-Plaine and Illinois, about ninety miles, with one hundred and seventy-five feet descent to the mouth of the Little Vermilion, four miles below the rapids of the Illinois River; at which point that stream is navigable for steamboats at all seasons.*

Ten years and $40,000 have now been spent upon this work, and not a shovelful of earth, so far as I can learn, is yet removed from the soil. Let the New-York merchants step in and make it, and the warehouses of Buffalo will be to St. Louis what those of New-Orleans are at present. New-York will have the whole trade of the Mississippi Valley, and the vast regions of the Missouri will be tributary to her market. A canal-boat that can navigate the lakes may then clear at Coenties Slip and discharge her cargo at a trading-post on the Yellow Stone. Such a canal would be to this

* See Note D.

Union what a cut through the Isthmus of Darien would be to the world: the one would draw St. Louis as near to New-York as the other would India to Europe. It would be well indeed that government should make it; but the means required are so slight in comparison with those invested in a hundred similar works, in different parts of the country, as to bring it easily within the limits of individual enterprise.

The State of Illinois, judging from the progress already made, will not complete the canal for half a century to come. The want of capital is here so great as almost to seal up each outlet for enterprise, though they present themselves on every side; and our eastern capitalists are so completely ignorant of the prodigious resources of this region that it may be long before the defect is supplied. Were the people in our rich eastern cities more familiar with even the geographical relations of this extraordinary region, I am convineed that more than one company would be formed that would be eager to purchase from the State of Illinois, at a handsome premium, the right of making the canal, and holding it in joint-stock for a term of years. When people of capital and enterprise open their eyes to this matter, the work will be accomplished in three seasons; and as you

may then take a steamboat at Buffalo, and check a berth for St. Peter's, a trip to the Falls of St. Anthony will soon be thought no more of than is now an excursion to Niagara. Fishing-parties will be made up at Islip for Lake Pepin; and Hewitt will furnish port-folios to tourists that wander away to sketch the awful scenery of the (now) remote "*Thunder's Nest*,"* while the "Tetons of the burnt wood" will supply Jennings's larder with game, and Paulding's best Madeira be drank by gentlemen that shoot elk among the Dacotahs.

* A young officer of the First Infantry, who commanded an exploring party into this savage region, so called by the Indians, arrived from his tour while the writer was at Prairie du Chien. He described the scenery as possessing a desolate grandeur which words could not paint.

LETTER XXVII.

St. Louis, March 9th, 1834.

Here I am, safely at last in the renowned city of San' Louis. Our route from Peoria, by the way of the flourishing towns of Springfield, Jacksonville,* and Alton, through the small meadow-like and half-cultivated prairies of Lower Illinois, was very agreeable. I believe I have not mentioned, that before getting into this fair and comparatively populous region, I had the pleasure, while crossing one prairie of considerable extent, of seeing it on fire on every side around me. The hour was near midnight, and the spectacle was magnificent beyond description. An illustration by Westall's pencil of the Rich Man in the Burning Lake, which I have seen somewhere, would give as near an idea of the scene as the painter's art could convey. In one place the prairie presented exactly the appearance of a broad burning pool, in others the flames swelled up like seas of fire, rolling the liquid element in solid columns over the land; and then,

* See Note E.

like the waves of the sea itself, when they break upon the shore, a thousand forked tongues of flame would project themselves far beyond the broken mass, and greedily lick up the dry aliment that lay before them. Our horses did not seem to mind the phenomenon at all, and we drove so near to the fire as to feel the heat very sensibly. But though we probably incurred no danger, it was almost startling, at times, to see a wall of fire as high as our horses' ears, in some places, stretching along the road-side, while the flames would shoot to the height of twenty feet or more when a gust of wind would sweep the prairie.

We had an accession of four or five passengers at Jacksonville, a very pretty and flourishing-looking place; and I was not a little amused to find, that out of six persons in the stage we had four *colonels;* and when we chanced to stop at a tavern, where I saw a cartridge-box and a musket over the mantelpiece, I could not help remarking aloud, that it was the first symptom of the existence of a private I had seen in the country. Some of the colonels looked a little sour, and the jest might not have passed off as easily as I could have wished it, had not my friend, who was also a colonel, entered my name on the tavern-register by the same distinguished title, which, I presume, qualified

me to speak a little *ad libitim* of militia deeds of arms.

The character of the country between Peoria and Alton, where you first strike the Mississippi, is much the same as that described in the previous part of this letter. The prairies are smaller and more fertile-looking than in the upper country; and when not under cultivation, resemble what at the North is called a "river-*flat*," or natural meadow. While on the immense plateaux or steppes which form the prairies of the north-western part of this State, on this side of Rock River, I described the occasional tracts of wood-land to you as occupying generally the hollows and ravines of those interminable plains, and thus rendering preposterous a favourite surmise of some philosophers, who would have it that the prairies are the deserted beds of lakes, from whose waters the existing groves once reared themselves as islands. In the districts which I have traversed latterly, however, the woodland, being generally higher than the prairie, gives a degree of reason-ableness to the supposition; and, indeed, where the new grass has begun to show itself in these shallow basins, one could almost suppose that some freakish power, more than mortal,—such as Ovid loved to sing,—had been at work metamorphosing the un-

stable waters into lakes of verdure. These rich savannas are in some places so sheltered by the lofty forests around them, that the cold winds have but little play; and to no lovelier spots can Spring make her first visits than to the beautiful groves which repose here and there over their bosom; and even now, when the snow-tracks of winter are hardly yet melted away,—

"Zefiro torna e'l bel tempo rimena,
E i fiori e l'herbe,"—

the prairie smiles, the heaven 's a deeper blue, and fondly the Manitou looks on his buxom daughter.*

I could now, although I confess a fire is still not uncomfortable, almost realize the grateful and glowing pictures of the summer prairies by Judge Hall's pencil:—the fresh grass rolled out into a verdant lake, with the points of woodland making into it like so many capes and promontories, and the clumps of trees studding its bosom like islands; here the broad reaches of natural meadow-land striking far into the forest like the friths of this grassy sea, and there a mass of heavy timber, like a bold headland, breaking its surface. The effect

* "Ridono i prati e'l ciel si rasserena,
Giove s'allegra di mirar sua figlia."—PETRARCH.

of first entering upon a prairie in summer is said to be equally novel and delightful; and the change from gloom to sunshine, from the closeness of a forest where a woodman's axe has never rung to the broad and free range of those delicious plains, impresses one like passing from a desert to a garden. In the words of Judge Hall,—"There is an air of civilization about them that wins the heart." These lower prairies, however,—though certainly more beautiful in their conformation than the immense plains of the upper country, where the sun rises and sets upon either extremity, as upon the ocean itself,—do not yet, I think, compare with the romantic tracts beyond Rock River, and west of Lake Michigan;—there where meadows, and groves, and rocky hills, and bright streams are all so richly intermingled. It was only in passing through this latter region—which will form part of the new territory of Ouisconsin,—that I regretted the season of the year did not allow me to see the country in its full beauty. True, indeed, I suffered much from cold in crossing the larger prairies to reach those remote districts; but I am persuaded that the larger prairies can never be seen to greater advantage than I beheld them. Their essential characteristics are grandeur and

loneliness; and these can in no way be so much heightened as by the garb of winter; nor would I, —as my fleet sleigh skimmed over their savage wastes, and inhaled a breeze that lent new life and vigour to every nerve,—have exchanged the singular but joyous excitement for all the charms that spring's green vesture or summer's balmy airs could impart to those magnificent solitudes.

The population seen in the last few days seemed to be of a very mixed character: some were Quakers from Pennsylvania, and they had every necessary and comfort of life; others again were miserable-looking creatures from North Carolina and parts of Tennessee, who lived with scarcely any labour, and kept a blanket suspended over their porch instead of a door,—in log-huts that had been built for several seasons. At Alton, again I saw, in their neat white houses, with their green Venetian blinds—their tasteful piazzas and pretty enclosures, with a newly-planted shrubbery,—sure indications of a New-England population. The same, or even greater, marks of improvement and superiority in their style of living over the mass of emigrants hither, are manifest, I am told, wherever the English have established themselves in Illinois. I have missed all their settlements by

passing to the westward of them; but both here and in Michigan I have always heard the English residents spoken of with respect and affection.

A few miles below Alton, on the Mississippi, I passed a deserted village, the whole population of which had been destroyed by the "milk-sickness."* The hamlet consisted of a couple of mills and a number of frame-houses, not one of which was now tenanted; but the dried weeds of last year choked the threshold of the latter, and the raceways of the mills were cumbered up with floating timber, while the green slime of two summers hung heavy upon their motionless wheels. Not an object but ourselves moved through the silent town; and the very crows seemed to make a circuit around the fated place, when they came in view of the thickly-sown burial-ground on the skirts of the deserted village.

We were now on the famous "American bottom;" and I was really astonished at the prodigious size of the trees, and the magnificent vegetation which this region displays; but the scattered inhabitants looked far from healthy. At Alton we struck the Mississippi; the view from its bluffs is here mag-

* A fatal spasmodic disease, peculiar, I believe, to the Valley of the Mississippi. It first attacks the cattle, and then those who eat beef or drink milk.

nificent, though I think that Flint's fervid pen has done it full justice.* A few miles below we passed the mouth of the Missouri, where its white and turbid current could be seen rushing in among the

* "Opposite the mouth of the Missouri, the American bottom terminates, and the bluffs come into the river. The bluffs bound the eastern bank of the river thence to the mouth of the Illinois. From these bluffs we contemplate one of the most impressive and beautiful landscapes in the world. On the opposite side the mighty Missouri is seen bringing its turbid and sweeping mass of waters at right angles to the Mississippi. The eye traces a long distance of the outline of the Missouri Valley, bounded on either side with an indistinct and blue line of hills; above it is the vast and most beautiful Mamelle prairie, dotted with green islands of wood, and skirted at the farthest ken of the eye with hills and forests. Above you on the same shore is the valley of the Illinois, itself bounded by heavy and magnificent bluffs of a peculiar character. The river brings in its creeping waters by a deep bed, that seems almost as straight as a canal. You have in view the valleys and bluffs of two noble streams, that join their waters to the Mississippi. You see the Mississippi changed to a turbid and sweeping stream, with jagged and indented banks below you. You see its calm and placid waters above the Missouri. On the opposite prairie there are level meadows, wheat-fields, corn-fields —smoke ascending from houses and cabins—vast flocks of domestic cattle—distinct indications of agriculture and improvement blended with the grand features of nature. There are clumps of trees, lakes, ponds, and flocks of sea-fowl wheeling their flight over them; in short, whatever of grandeur or beauty nature can furnish to sooth and to enrapture the beholder."—*Flint's Valley of the Mississippi*, page 96.

islands, and staining the limpid tide of the "father of rivers" far down the western shore, while for twenty miles below that clear stream still preserved its purity on the eastern side. Surely Father Hennepin was mistaken when he called the streams above and below the Missouri by the same name! For the Upper Mississippi, except in its breadth and volume of water, bears but little resemblance to the lower river; while the Missouri, as it tears through its muddy banks to drink that beautiful tide, soon gives its own turbulent character to the whole stream below, and even impresses its peculiar features upon the gulf in which it at last loses itself.

It was too late in the evening to cross when we arrived opposite to St. Louis, and I amused myself before retiring for the night in listening to the sound of the church-bells—the first I had heard in many a month—and watching the lights as they danced along the lines of the dusky city, and were reflected in the dark rolling river. We crossed in time for breakfast, and I am now tolerably established at the best hotel in the place.

LETTER XXVIII.

St. Louis, Missouri, March 12th.

You last left me in the ancient city of St. Louis, the capital and metropolis, though not yet the commercial emporium, of the grand valley of the Mississippi,—once the ultima thule of western adventure, and still the depot of the fur-trade, and the bureau of Indian affairs. Here, the Spaniard, the Frenchman, and the American have in turn held rule, and their blood, with no slight sprinkling of that of the aborigines, now commingles in the veins of its inhabitants.

The aspect of the town partakes of the characteristics of all its original possessors: in one section you find it built up entirely with the broad steep-roofed stone edifices of the French, and the Spaniard's tall stuccoed dwelling raising its tiers of open corridors above them, like a once showy but half-defaced galleon in a fleet of battered frigates; while another will present you only with the clipper-built brick houses of the American residents,—light as a Baltimore schooner, and pert-

looking as a Connecticut smack. The town, which is situated about eighteen miles below the mouth of the Missouri, lies on two plateaux, extending along the Mississippi for some miles. The first of these steppes rises gently from the water, till, at the distance of about a hundred yards, it becomes perfectly level, and affords a fine plane for the main street of the place, which runs parallel to the river. An acclivity, rather longer and steeper, then intervenes, when the second plateau commences, and runs back a perfectly level plain, extending for miles in every direction. This plain, near the town, is covered with shrub oaks and other undergrowth; but it finally assumes the character of a naked prairie, which probably, at no very distant time, extended here to the banks of the Mississippi.

That part of the town immediately upon the river is built, in a great measure, on a rock that lies a few feet beneath the surface of the soil; the stone excavated in digging the cellars affording a fine material for the erection of some substantial warehouses that line the wharf. The site, for a great city, apart from its admirable geographical position, is one of the finest that could be found; and having been laid out of late years in modern style, with broad rectangular streets, St. Louis

will, however it may increase in size, always be an airy, cheerful-looking place. But its streets command no interesting prospects, and indeed the town has nothing of scenic beauty in its position, unless viewed from beneath the boughs of the immense trees on the alluvial bottom opposite, when the whitewashed walls and gray stone parapets of the old French houses present rather a romantic appearance. St. Louis, however, can boast one class of objects among its sources of attraction, which are alone sufficient to render it one of the most interesting places in the Union. It is a collection of those singular ancient mounds, which, commencing in the western part of the State of New-York, and reaching, as Humboldt tells us, to the interior of Mexico, have so entirely set at naught the ingenuity of the antiquary. The mounds in the north suburb of St. Louis occupy a commanding position on the Mississippi, and cover ground enough, together, for a large body of men to encamp upon. They stand distinct from each other, generally in the form of truncated pyramids, with a perfect rectangular base; at one point four or five tumuli are so grouped together as to form nearly two sides of a square, while at another, several hundred yards off, two or more detached mounds rise singly from the plain. The

summit of one of these is occupied by a public reservoir, for furnishing the town with drinking water; the supply being forced up to the tank by a steam-engine on the banks of the river, and subsequently distributed by pipes throughout the city. This mound, with the exception of one or two enclosed within the handsome grounds of General Ashley, is the only one fenced from the destruction that always sooner or later overtakes such non-productive property, when in the suburbs of a rapidly growing city; and it is a subject of surprise to a stranger, that, considering the want of public squares in the town, individual taste and public spirit do not unite to preserve these beautiful eminences in their exact forms, and connect them by an enclosure, with shrubbery and walks, thus forming a park that might be the pride of St Louis. The prettily cultivated gardens in the environs, and the elegance and liberality shown in the construction of more than one new private dwelling in the heart of the town, evince that neither taste nor means are wanting to suggest and carry into effect such an improvement.

I am so little of an adept at estimating measurements, that I will not attempt to guess at the size of these mounds: they are much the largest that I have yet seen; but none of them can compare with

the immense parallelogram near Cahokia, in Illinois, which Mr. Flint describes as eight hundred yards in circumference, and ninety feet in height—one side of it alone affording a terraced garden for the monks of La Trappe, who had a monastery among the group of two hundred tumuli around.

The population of St. Louis may be estimated at seven or eight thousand; and there are four or five churches and a noble cathedral representing its different religious persuasions. The inhabitants find their sources of wealth in the rich lead-mines of their own State, and in the trade of the Upper Mississippi, the Missouri, and the Illinois. The burthensome steamboats from New-Orleans reach here at the lowest stage of the river; and here you may see river-craft of every shape and form, from the thousand boatable tributaries of the Mississippi, clustering around the wharves.

In no town of the West do you find such a variety of people and character as in St. Louis; and here, in fact, only, where more than one "last of the boatmen" still lingers, have you an opportunity of studying that singular class of beings, the Engagés (as they are called) of the fur-trade—fellows that talk of a trip to the Rocky Mountains as you would speak of a turn on the Battery; and think as much

of an Indian encounter as a New-York blood does of a "spree" with a watchman.

"H——," whispered a gentleman to me, seizing my elbow as I passed through the bar-room of my hotel last night, "just light a cigar here, and listen to those fellows for a moment." He pointed to a couple of coarse-featured but respectably dressed men, gossiping over a glass of punch in the chimney corner. "Oh, I remember him well," were the first words I caught,—"you slapped him over with your rifle, and I took the fellow's hair."—"No, no," rejoined the other; "that was the long-locked fellow, whose crown you used to wear about so long afterward. I mean the second chap, that would have been too many for me after I had struck my leg-knife* into the chine of the other, if your hatchet hadn't done for him when my rifle missed fire."—"Ah, yes," replied his companion, smacking his lips, as he sipped his vapoury pot'een; "you mean the red devil that begged so on the bank, when I took his hair, and left him to curl up and die." One or two more scalping amateurs soon joined in this tender discourse on love-locks; and I cannot now, from the general conversation

* Worn beneath the garter of the leggin, and carried in addition to the larger knife which the western hunter always wears in his girdle.

that ensued, recall the numerous other touching expressions and philanthropic sentiments that struck me as worthy of preservation. But observing that some of the speakers were dreadfully mutilated, I was induced to inquire in another quarter whether or not their misfortunes were connected with the savage deeds I had heard so coolly related: they had, each of them, I learned, signalized themselves in Indian warfare. You would be incredulous, were you to hear their various intolerable sufferings and perilous escapes detailed. One of the number, particularly, who went about on crutches, had been so badly wounded in one encounter with the Blackfeet Indians, that after being carried some distance by his companions, they were compelled to leave him to his fate, as one wholly unable to assist himself, and consequently too great an encumbrance to them. The bones of his ankle had been badly shattered, and before parting with his comrades he insisted upon one of them amputating his foot; having no surgical instrument, they all shrunk from the butchering task; and the intrepid hunter then went to work on himself with his wood-knife. The foot was severed, and the actual cautery being applied with a red-hot tomahawk by one of those present, the patient found himself somewhat easier; but his friends

were too hard pressed by the hostile bands to wait until he should be fit to travel; they thought, indeed, he would never recover; and they were compelled to leave him to his fate. One of the company, however, consented to remain for a few days, in order to bury the wounded man, and sufficient food for a week was placed in a wigwam by the river-side.

The resolute patient, instead of dying, grew daily better, and (the horses of the party having been long since stolen or devoured) his companion became alarmed lest he should be saddled with his maimed charge all the way back to the settlements; he was wretch enough to seize upon the little provision left, and leave his hapless comrade alone to perish—that is, to die of hunger, if not previously taken and tortured to death by the Indians. The condition then of the deserted man was bad enough to appal even a western hunter. He was suffering under a violent fever, and I heard him myself describe the agony it cost him, in this condition, to drag his recently maimed limb down the steep bank of a river, as he crawled there a dozen times a day for a drink; while, fearing to remain on the shore lest a roving savage should see him, he would each time creep up the acclivity to the leafy shelter afforded on the top. He subsisted on the wild

grapes and berries within his reach, and, these becoming exhausted, he was compelled to move from the spot. This exertion made him aware that he had still some ability to proceed; and knowing that his party, now more than a week's march ahead, would remain encamped at a certain point for several days, the determined fellow resolved to follow them. This he effected. His friends received him like one risen from the dead; for the craven that abandoned him had reported that he was no more, and all swore to carry him safely home.

I overheard a gentleman this morning questioning this bold backwoodsman about some of these details; he answered modestly, and spoke of the horrors of his situation, when languishing on the scorching prairie, with the same sang-froid that I had heard him mention "taking the hair" of a hostile Indian. There were two young savages from the Rocky Mountain neighbourhood—a Flathead and a Nez-percée—standing by during the conversation last night; but I believe that they did not understand the language that was a vehicle for so many amiable sentiments.

There is a good deal of romantic interest in the roving and precarious life of the borderers, who carry on the trade in which these men were en-

gaged. The Arab proverb of the African desert—that every stranger you meet there is an enemy—may with equal truth be said of the wilds of Northern America. The more remote tribes are in an almost constant state of warfare; and a solitary wanderer among them must look principally to his rifle for protection.

Two well-armed Engagés are said to be a match for any three Indians, though the latter are no despicable antagonists. The appearance of some of these tribes, when on a war-party, must be singularly martial and picturesque. Their shirt of buff, gayly beaded with wampum; the scarlet leggins, fringed with porcupine-quills; the highly ornamented shooting-pouch, and rattling collar of polished bears' claws, with the gay sash and rich buffalo-robe; and above all, the chivalric scalp-lock, tufted with feathers—must make no contemptible appearance as they flaunt over the green prairie, and attract the eye to the horsemanship of many a well-mounted rider. They would take the eye of a painter, and have, in fact, suggested some most spirited sketches to Rindisbacher, a highly original artist at St. Louis, at whose rooms I have spent more than one agreeable hour.

LETTER XXIX.

St. Louis, March 14.

Yesterday I had an opportunity of seeing a remnant of a once formidable tribe, the Kickapoos, hold a talk with the venerable General Clarke, the U. S. superintendent of Indian affairs, and well known to you from the valuable work entitled "Lewis and Clarke's Travels," published under the auspices of government twenty-five years since. I was dining at the house of the hospitable veteran, who lives in some style at St. Louis, when one of the clerks of his department summoned him to the "council-chamber." It was a moderate-sized room, communicating with the general's study and his public office, and connected with the library, and with the street by a narrow staircase. The walls of the apartment were completely coated with Indian arms and dresses, and the mantelpiece loaded with various objects of curiosity connected with the aborigines. Among the latter was that celebrated piece of pottery that has caused so much idle speculation among the curious,—a small vase formed by three perfect heads blended in one, the features being marked,

and wholly dissimilar from those of any existing race of Indians.*

The Kickapoos, a forlorn-looking set, were sitting around the room on a bench against the wall, their swarthy features and dingy blankets contrasting strikingly enough with the fair brows and fashionable attire of the ladies who glided into the council-room as we moved thither from the dinner-table. A little gray-haired French interpreter occupied himself in lighting a mock tomahawk-pipe, formed of some light and showy metal, as the general took his seat; and then a large and elaborately carved pipe being laid like an ensign of office on the table in front of the stately old officer, the talk began.

As there was nothing in it that may not be found in any Indian talk of the last fifty years, I made no record of what was said. It contained nothing particularly characteristic, and I was only struck by the mournful appealing tone of the principal Indian who spoke on one side, and the air of sympathy and paternal kindness which the general preserved on the other. The application, I believe, was merely a begging one, and he promised to assist them.

The sight of such a miserable remnant of a tribe

* See note F.

whose name you will find on maps of but a recent date, written over no inconsiderable portion of territory, would suggest doubts of the humanity of our Indian policy; and yet, as much as that policy has been abused, I defy those most active in casting opprobrium to point to an act relating to the Indians in the statute-book that does not evince that our general government, since it had an existence, has kept the intention of bettering the condition of the aborigines continually in view. The United States have not exercised the right of property over a foot of ground that has not been fairly purchased, nor has an Indian been removed from the soil acquired by treaty without ample provision, so far as money and necessaries are concerned, being made for his present comfort, and to promote his advance towards civilization. How then has our national policy proved so detrimental to the Indian? Is it from the measures adopted by Congress, or the manner in which they are carried into effect? I should answer, both. The measures themselves are pernicious, and the manner in which they are acted upon fatal to the Indian. It is destructive to them as a people to remove them from their homes, and scatter them among hostile tribes, over strange hunting-grounds; and it is destructive to them individually by

keeping them continually on the frontier, and in contact only with the most lawless portions of society—it is destructive, too, to furnish them with the means of idleness, to enrich them for others to prey upon. The very idea of giving an Indian money when there is nothing but whiskey for him to buy with it, or of furnishing him with cattle and farming utensils when surrounded by white men who live by their rifles, is preposterous. There might be some hope of his abandoning the hunter state, and gradually turning herdsman, did he, girt in by a belt of civilization, inhabit some mountainous district, where the different pursuits of his neighbours would prevent collision, and the brokenness of the country secure it from their cupidity. But to keep the native for ever in contact with the pioneer, the hereditary enemy of three centuries! What is it but calling the butchers of Philip of Pokanoket from the dead to massacre the survivors of his race?

So much for our well-meant but misjudging policy, and now for the mode of carrying it into effect. This, I need not tell you, is done by agents subordinate to a general superintendent, in his turn responsible to the department at Washington. These men, where the military at our extensive

outposts give weight to their authority, and where high-minded officers and well-disciplined soldiers are the only white men they have to deal with, may exercise a useful and energetic influence in those remote districts: but what could a United States' agent, or what could the commandant of a garrison do in the northern part of Illinois, for instance? Take a case that might have and perhaps has occurred:—the agent, in an Indian difficulty with the settlers, applies to the governor of the State for a militia force to protect "his children," as the Indians call themselves: the governor, knowing that nothing would give the militia more pleasure than to cut the throats of the Indians, refuses the application, and refers the agent to the nearest body of United States' troops in the neighbourhood; while every subaltern in the command knows, that if he interferes between an Indian and a white man, he will be sued instantly in the courts of the State. When I was at Prairie du Chien, there were several of the officers who had been cited to appear in court for having, pursuant to order, removed "squatters" from the Indian lands over the Mississippi. The Indian then despises the agent, because he is clothed with no military authority; and the pioneer despises

the military, because their hands are tied by the local civil power, whatever it be.

There is then, you may imagine, no love lost between the Indian and the latter; but between the Indian and the soldier a relation every way desirable exists: he loves and fears the regulars, as much as he hates and despises the militia. *He* knows (whatever the newspapers may tell *you*) that, as a general rule, it is the former* who always chastises him in battle; and from whom alone he may expect mercy after the conflict is over.

The slightest intimation of the will of a subaltern, *okemar*, or war-chief, as they call him, is law with a red man. This feeling, on their part, to my mind indicates at once an alteration in the administration of Indian affairs,—it is to make the commandants of military posts *ex officio* Indian agents. There are two objections to this: one of which is, that in their capacity as guardians of the Indian, it would impose a most disagreeable duty upon the officers, from the frequent collision with the citizens; the other is, that it would cause a

* If the writer paused while making this remark to expatiate upon the disgraceful conduct of the Illinois militia under Stillman, in the late Sauk and Fox war, he could not fail to pay a tribute to the brave miners who followed Dodge and other leaders of the Ouisconsin country against Black Hawk.

great outcry among the innumerable persons on the frontiers employed in plundering Indian property, under the innocent phrase of "Hooking from Uncle Sam" (whether through the medium of agencies, land-treaties, or getting up an Indian war now and then, "by way of having some government-money spent in the country;"*) to have any of the avenues of the various existing kinds of peculation closed against them. To overcome these objections, I would place every garrison *over the border*,—upon territory owned only by the Indians and the United States; and I would consider every foot of that territory as within the walls of the garrison. The whites might visit it as they would a fortress, or pass through it as they would cross a draw-bridge; but no more. The distribution of goods, if any took place among the Indians, should be made by the sutler of the post; and every treaty, when held, should be held only at Washington. The disgusting scenes of swindling and debauchery witnessed at the treaties on the

* The Black Hawk war,—the principal actor of which avers that he went over the Mississippi merely to help the Winnebagoes make corn, when he was set upon by the whites,—some people are mischievous enough to say, was got up by a cabal for speculation. It cost government two millions. It is a standing joke in Illinois to say it would there have been taken by contract for $50,000.

frontiers, unless they have been much exaggerated to me by those who boasted a share in them, are a disgrace to the nation.

The whole drift of my policy would, in a few words, be merely this:—First, to keep the Indians in contact only with that authority which they fully acknowledge, and which, as they never willingly provoke, would sit but lightly upon them. Secondly, when I brought them in contact with citizens at all,—which in holding treaties would occur,—to surround them with those who, like the materials of which the army is chiefly composed, are actuated by none of the prejudices, feelings, and habits that unavoidably spring up among the people of the frontiers; a people whose vices are those only of their condition, and whose virtues are pre-eminently their own.* I write boldly, and perhaps unadvisedly, upon this subject; but in a case where so many regular physicians have failed, it is allowable for a quack to prescribe. It is too late to adopt the only just policy of preserving a portion of their ancient domains to the tribes; and since government has now matured its plan of collecting their scattered remnants into one common country, I hope, if necessary to keep

* See Letter XXIV.

the whites away, the boundaries may bristle with bayonets.

How strange it is that—with the exception of Penn's people—the English and Americans have never been able to live upon the terms with the Indians which the French so long, and apparently so easily, preserved. I attribute the success of the latter entirely to the politeness of a Frenchman, of whatever class, displaying itself alike to a savage or a signor; while we Americans inherit too much of that feeling from the English which prompts us to measure out our good-breeding according to the condition of those with whom we deal. To promote the kind intercourse of the French with the Indians, government did nothing, individuals every thing; with us, government attempts every thing, and individuals frustrate all.

It is much to be regretted that our views of this peculiar people are derived so often from individuals so little qualified by education or natural endowment to form a just conception of character. The redeeming qualities of a savage are as wholly lost upon an uncultivated or vulgar mind as are the charms of a landscape too broken for cultivation.

"What kind of a country is it to the north of you?" ask a tiller of the rich Mohawk flats.

"Oh, a terrible ugly country; nothing but mountains, lakes, and crags," is the reply.

"Well, how do you like your Indian neighbours?" say you to a new settler in Illinois.

"Oh, they are a poor set of devils; live from hand to mouth, and don't know nothing nohow."

A deep observer of this kind becomes a trader, and therefore considers himself qualified to write a book, from which the city-bred periodical writer may deduce all sorts of sweeping conclusions damnatory of the whole Indian race.*

* "Our acquaintance," says the Quarterly Review, No. LXI., December, 1824, "with the peculiarities of Indian customs and character has unfortunately, in general, been derived from the reports of traders,—usually the most ignorant, and depraved, and dishonest part of the transatlantic white population; or of persons totally uneducated, who have lived in captivity or from choice among them; or of well-meaning but simple and illiterate missionaries." There are few works, indeed, unless it be "Long's Expedition," and the writings of Mr. Schoolcraft, that have thrown much light upon Indian character, since the faithful (though long considered as apocryphal) account of Carver appeared.

Carver's Travels were written by an American provincial officer, just after the French war; and one might venture to recommend them as giving at this day a more just idea of the aborigines than any book that has since appeared. A Rocky Mountain man would smile at the idea of one who had wandered no farther west presuming to have an opinion upon the subject. But where can you better form a severe estimate of Indian character than on the frontier, where its good and bad qualities are alike

Of the false positions advanced on such insufficient grounds, it would be easy enough to cite many an instance; but one might as well sit down gravely to answer the innumerable ridiculous representations with which the English tourists that visit us amuse their countrymen at home. The Englishman's estimation of the Anglo-American, and the Anglo-American's appreciation of the aborigines of his country, must be alike unfair, so long as each will most preposterously persist in judging every thing according to a home standard. The only point of affinity between us and the

tested by contact, and may be tried in comparison with those of the existing white population. In advancing so positive an opinion, however, of the superior truth and fidelity of Carver's delineations, the writer ought to add that his convictions are, in a great measure, derived from information drawn from persons more experienced in Indian life than himself,—officers who had been out on many a tramp; traders who had long lived beyond the borders; hunters who had roved the forest and prairie by the side and in pursuit of the "untamed savage;" and Indian agents who had dwelt amid their charge till their habits and feelings had become identified with theirs. The casual remarks of such a variety of characters (and if you adopt the Western freedom of intercourse that prevails everywhere,—whether in the hut of the pioneer, in stages, steamboats, or around the fire of an inn,—you will find yourself conversing with a hundred such) impart more information than all the closet-essays on the subject that ever were penned.

English is, that we about as much resemble the expatriated Cavaliers and Puritans who were the germ of our population, as do the modern English themselves. With the Indians it is still more difficult to draw a parallel in reference to any existing people, unless you would compare them with the rude tribes of Africa, or the degraded natives of New-Holland, neither of which are to be named with them in natural intelligence or loftiness of bearing. The pure Theism existing among the Indians is alone sufficient to elevate them above all barbarians that ever trod the earth.* The belief in the existence of the Che-Manitou, the Omnipotent Spirit of Goodness, and the faith in those blessed abodes where the noble spirits are to be gathered hereafter,—though the worship of the one may be mingled with mummery such as all Christendom indulged in but a few centuries since, and the dream of the other blended with images as earthly as the preacher will sometimes use in describing the physical torments of the damned,—are still heartfelt and enduring with the Indian, and bring forth fruits according to the soil in which they have been implanted. Some writers, I am aware, will tell you that an Indian's ideas of the

* See note H.

Deity and eternity are much confused—are not at all defined. And, pray, what mind can take in clearly all the attributes of Divinity, or find images in itself for that which is infinite? How dare we, who owe *every thing* to a written revelation, presume to scrutinize the want of spirituality in their faith, who have had no such aid to enlighten them? Surely the fire on those altars which have been kindled anew from Heaven should burn purer and brighter than those which have been fed by man since the world began! Is it not enough that the two thousand years which have swept over the earth since Christianity dawned upon mankind, find the Indian not farther from the primeval faith than were our forefathers when the blessed light of the Gospel was first vouchsafed to them?

Let me conclude this letter by copying here an extract from the only legislator whose people ever carried the precepts of Christianity into practice in their intercourse with the Indians. Penn, who had thoroughly mastered many dialects of the Indian tribes, and who made it his business to apply himself to the study of their dispositions and habits, conveys his impressions in the following language:—

"In liberality they excel—nothing is too good for their friend—give them a fine gun, coat, or

other thing, it may pass twenty hands before it sticks. Light of heart; strong affections, but soon spent; the most merry* creatures that live—feast

* "Merry" is a term that is found in few modern works upon Indian characteristics; and yet the writer has been told by those familiar with the interminable Indian legends, in which Nannibojou and Namay-mouchon, the genii of their magical lore, figure so largely that they abound with sportive incidents. Some of these, indeed, excessively ludicrous, he has himself heard detailed by lips that were not the less witching because the blood that lent its glow there was of a deeper crimson than that which flushes the cheek of a New-York belle. It is much to be regretted, that among the numerous accomplished young men at our different posts on the frontier, there are not found some who will improve their leisure by rescuing these wild tales from oblivion. I have often heard the officers speak with animation of the effect produced upon them, while lying with two or three Indians around their watch-fire, when off on a tramp (as these brief military excursions of a small detachment are called), at hearing the guttural laugh, or deep exclamation of delight, from their swarthy companions, as one of the number would abridge the hours of darkness with his humorous and grotesque narratives, spun out to an immeasurable length. A disposition to *quiz*, too, is not uncommon among the Indians; and they take great delight, especially, in practising upon the fears of whites who may be thrown unexpectedly into their company in out-of-the-way places. An officer mentioned to the writer, that in hunting one day on the prairies, he for some time missed a Frenchman who had come out with him; when chancing to look towards a swamp, a few gun-shots off, he saw his attendant dart from the woody covert, and, casting away his arms, fly in a zigzag direc-

and dance perpetually; they never have much, nor want much; wealth circulateth like the blood —all parts partake, and, though none shall want what another hath,* yet exact observers of prop-

tion across the open plain. The gentleman could not conceive the cause of the fellow's peculiar movements, until, upon looking more narrowly, he saw an Indian upon the edge of the thicket, drawing his rifle on the frightened gumbo, who was thus trying to foil his aim. The officer, of course, levelled his own rifle; but seeing at a glance that the Indian was beyond its reach, he gave up his attendant for lost; when suddenly the Indian threw down his piece, and burst into a convulsion of laughter. The officer then approached him; but it was long before the other found breath to say, "Wymetticose" (Frenchman) "one very great brave."—See note G.

While dwelling thus upon Indian traits the writer may mention a fact which vividly illustrates a characteristic more generally conceded than that which we have just attempted to establish. The singular atmospherical phenomenon of the shooting stars which occurred in December, 1834, it may be recollected, strongly affected the superstitious far and wide throughout the country. The Indians would, of course, have some interpretation of their own for so wonderful a spectacle; and, consequently, they seem generally to be agreed that the distracted firmament betokens the dissolution of the Union and the dispersion of the stars in its flag.

* To illustrate this, the writer might adduce an incident which he witnessed at an inn in Chicago. In a discussion about Indian character, a Frenchman became quite incensed at the imputation of thieving, advanced as one of its strongest characteristics by one of the company. The champion of the aborigines insisted that the coolness with which an Indian sometimes appropriates

erty; they care for little because they want but little, and the reason is, a little contents them. In

the goods of another arose entirely from his having no conception of the nature of property, or rather, a principle in Indian ethics which taught him to consider each duplicate of another's possessions as his own, and that no ceremony was to be used in appropriating it. An Indian happened to pass the window at the moment, and he was called in to determine the dispute. He was a grizzly old warrior, with a face all cut to pieces by Harrison's horsemen in the affair of Tippe-canoe; where, as he did not hesitate to inform us, he had fought for the *Sagernash* against the Long-knives. The old fellow, who understood but a few words of English, had come into Chicago to dispose of a few skins; the proceeds from the sale of which he had expended for a variety of "notions," which he carried about his person. He had three or four common tobacco-pipes stuck in the folds of a gay-coloured handkerchief, swathed around his head like a turban; and a long trail of that preparation of the fragrant weed yclept "pig-tail" pendent from his girdle; and a clothes-line, a pocket-knife, and other trumpery in his hands. Some of the latter slipped from his fingers as he turned round to shut the door on entering; and the Frenchman, picking them up one after another, requested permission to keep them, which was at once willingly granted: another person then, taking the hint from the Frenchman, asked for something else, and the rest of the company following suit, we soon stripped the old Indian of every thing he had. The smiling readiness with which he met every request afforded a complete triumph to the Frenchman—we admitted at least that it gave the strongest negative proof in his favour. It is unnecessary to add that the articles were all restored, and the Indian dismissed with several additions to his little stock. Carver says, that "the In-

this they are sufficiently revenged on us—if they are ignorant of our pleasures, they are also ignorant of our pains. We sweat and toil to live; their pleasures feed them—I mean their hunting, fishing, and fowling; and this table is spread everywhere. This poor people are under a dark night in things relating to religion, to be sure (the tradition of it); *yet they believe in a God and immortality, without the help of metaphysics.*"*

dians, in their common state, are strangers to all distinction of property except in the articles of domestic use, which every one considers as his own, and increases as circumstances admit. They are extremely liberal to each other, and supply the deficiency of their friends with any superfluity of their own." The recently published Life of Black Hawk, however doubtful may be its claims as a specimen of Indian autobiography, contains some genuine observations upon this subject.

* Vide the collected Works of Penn.

LETTER XXIX.

Jefferson Barracks, Missouri, March 18.

A packet of letters of introduction politely forwarded to this post by a distinguished officer, to whom I have already been much indebted for similar flattering attentions, has procured me the acquaintance of General A——, and the officers under his command, including several of the new corps of dragoons, which has here its head-quarters. General A——, with a courtesy which I cannot easily forget, made me immediately at home in his accomplished and agreeable family, and my welcome among the officers is such as would keep alive the memory of the weeks I lived in garrison at Prairie du Chien, could those delightful hours be forgotten. You have never been banished long enough from the bosom of society to realize the satisfaction one feels at finding one's self in such a circle after masquerading for months among all sorts of people. In all other society but the best we have to adapt ourselves studiously to the feelings and prejudices

which prevail around us: in the most cultivated circles only are perfect freedom of discussion and unshackled interchange of sentiment to be found. I am not prepared to deny, however, that character there loses in interest what it gains in amenity. To my own taste, there are no gradations in society long tolerable between the raw material as you find it on the frontier, and the thoroughly manufactured article as one occasionally meets with it elsewhere: vulgarity is excluded alike from the two extremes; because, affectation and pretension, the only characteristics essentially vulgar, have place in neither. This however isa digression.

I have been here nearly a week, and every day brings forth something to render my stay more agreeable. The barracks are romantically situated in an open wood on a high bluff, whose base is washed by the Mississippi; they are built in the form of a parallelogram encompassing three sides of a noble parade, which is open on the fourth to the river, and commands a most extensive view over its broad and majestic current, its rich alluvial islands, and the magnificent forests on the opposite shores. The ride hither from St. Louis, ten or twelve miles only, has but little to recommend it, except occasionally a pretty prospect on the

river as you sometimes approach its banks, especially when descending to the hollow wherein lies the decayed village of Carandolet, or Viude Poche, as it is generally called from the poverty of its inhabitants. The aspect of this ancient hamlet, when compared with that of the modern part of St. Louis, would remind one of Rip Van Winkle, and the new generation that greeted his return from the land of dreams, except that the drowsy village looks as if it had gone to sleep some time about the middle of the last century, and had not yet had its slumbers invaded. The old houses, of crumbling stone and timber black with age, appear as frail as their trembling shadows on the river that ripples near; and the scantily dressed, swart-looking children that dodge like muskrats behind the dilapidated enclosures, as you drive through the town, seem to belong to the aboriginal as much as to the white population of the country. They speak an ancient patois of the French, and the carefully cultivated gardens still surviving here and there through the place, otherwise indicate the race from whence they sprung.

Below Jefferson Barracks there are one or two pretty rides along the river; the one most worthy of mention leads to a remarkable cavern but a few miles from the garrison. The entrance is in the

face of a limestone cliff, abruptly terminating a ravine near the river, and covered at the top with a flourishing forest growth. The ravine itself at the upper end is walled in with rocks and underwood, and the rough bed of a brook, which issuing from the cave flows through the hollow, is the most prominent passage to the cavern itself. The entrance forms nearly a perfect arch, some twenty feet in height; the roof for some depth being nearly flat, and the gravelled floor so level that I found but little difficulty in advancing on horseback into the shadowy realm, until a turn in the cave excluded the daylight, and my timid horse refused to proceed farther. At this point I was overtaken by the party of officers whom I had accompanied to visit the cave, but who, for convenience, had parted with their horses before entering the ravine. A soldier in attendance led mine out of the cavern, and picketted him on the hill with his companions; while, marshalled along by a dozen dragoons with torches, our party advanced into the cave. The turns were few, and were it not for the occasional rocks and other inequalities on the floor, there was room enough, as a dragoon remarked, to stable a regiment of cavalry. The ceiling in the mean time became unequal in height, and took a variety of forms; the

limestone vault above assuming in one place, called the coffin-chamber, the exact form of the gloomy object from which it takes its name; while, with the slight aid of fancy, the semblance of an inverted boat apparently imbedded in the ceiling in another place suggested a more pleasing image. After advancing several hundred yards, and exploring one or two false passages, the roof suddenly dropped so near to the floor, which was now alternately rock and water, that the fatigue of going on in the crouching position rendered necessary was more than doubled, while nothing presented to repay the toil. We therefore determined to return to the last chamber that we had left, which was in fact one of the finest of the cave; here, on a broad rock in the centre, reposed a cold Virginia ham, flanked by a couple of chickens, with a tray of wine-biscuits and a fragrant Ohio cheese bringing up the rear; while amid the bubbles of a cold spring beneath the rock a couple of bottles of champaign reared their grenadier necks, is if eager to start from the ambush. A half a dozen dragoons bearing torches, like the living chandeliers of "Ranald of the Mist," stood around; their lights now gleaming on the sparry roof, or flickering on the shallow stream that rippled along the bottom of the cavern, and

now trembling on the damp air that swept through the place, and giving its recesses by turns to glimmer or to gloom. The joke, the laugh, and song meantime went round, while the bats, the only witnesses of our orgies, and which actually in some places hung in festoons along the wall, would drop now and then from the rude cornices of our banqueting-hall, and create no little confusion around our primitive table. At last the notes of a bugle, which we had left at the entrance, winding in many a prolonged echo through the sinuous vault, gave warning that another party of officers, with whom some of us intended to continue the afternoon's ride, were waiting outside the cavern. We emerged together from its shadowy chambers, and taking to our horses again, the mounted privates filed off through the wood with their officer, and took the road to the garrison; while the rest of our party galloped along the bank of the river, to enjoy the beautiful sunset prospect of the opposite shore.

I was repeatedly struck with the intelligent remarks of the dragoons in attendance while we were exploring the cave, as, without for a moment trenching on the sternness of military etiquette with their officers, they would occasionally ask a question about some mineralogical specimen, or in

a quiet way by themselves discuss its nature. The new corps, indeed, to which they belong, is, take it altogether, composed of admirable materials, though it must be admitted that some unpardonable oversights were made in its original organization. The omission of providing riding-masters and a school of practice for both horses and men, is a defect that all the care and exertions of the accomplished and energetic officers of the corps can hardly remedy. The same pains should be taken with each individual horse, as in "setting up" an ordinary recruit before subjecting him to company drill; and no private should be allowed to back the managed charger assigned to him before he has taken at least one course of regular lessons with the riding-master; nor should a single troop have been sent from the head-quarters of the regiment before not only every squad was perfect in its drill, but every company in the regiment had manœuvred for months together. The omission of the necessary provisions in the bill reported by Congress, and the dispersion of the regiment on the frontier as each company is recruited, almost forbids an approach to such a state of discipline. The three new companies here are nearly perfect in the light infantry exercise, which enters largely into the

manœuvres of dragoons, but the exactness of their movements when mounted varies with the skill of each individual horseman. They expect orders every day to join the companies that have already proceeded to the south-west, and advance with them against the Pawnees. It would be a fine sight to see such a body of well-mounted troopers moving over the prairies, which have never witnessed a similar spectacle since the steel-clad warriors of De Soto shook their lances in these wilds.* The consequent exertions of the officers to put man and horse in condition to take the field are untiring; but unless the season for preparation be much extended, the want of elementary practice in a riding-school will render it impossible to attain an end so desirable. In the mean time, nothing can be finer than the appearance of both men and horses individually; the former, all native-born Americans, are recruited entirely from the respectable working-classes,—young farmers, tradesmen, and mechanics; while occasionally a young merchant, lawyer, or physician has been led by the

* The romantic expedition of this bold Spaniard and his gallant followers will soon become more familiar to the public from a work by an accomplished friend now in press, which has excited much expectation; an expectation, which we may venture to say, from having seen a portion of the MS., will not be disappointed.

love of enterprise to enlist among them. Some of these, having no idea of the details of military discipline, and the necessary distinctions of rank and requisitions of military etiquette, have become disgusted with a soldier's life, and deserted their corps; but the majority of the new recruits seem pleased with their present situation, and eager to enter more earnestly upon the mode of life which they have adopted.

The appearance of the horses would delight you. The officer who superintended their purchase has been very happy in matching them, and keeping the colour of each company distinct; and you can readily imagine the fine appearance of fifty white-tailed duns or spirited iron grays, any two of which would make a perfect match,—a squadron of glossy chestnuts or troop of blacks as dark as night. Having never seen any of the superb cavalry in the armies of Europe, where the horses of a whole regiment are perfectly matched, the sight has all the charm of novelty for me; and whenever the dragoon horses are paraded, I find myself on horseback along with them. This, with rummaging the very good library belonging to the post, or lounging into the music-room at the hour when the band is practising, where I am often rewarded with a well-executed piece from

some modern opera, or listening to touches from fairer fingers at the general's quarters in the evening,—this, adding agreeable conversation, and an Indian pipe or two of *kinnekinic* after dinner, carries one well enough through a day, already shortened by watching with some interest the regular succession of military duties and the showy display of a large garrison.

I was much diverted with a little incident which I witnessed the other evening. I had been supping with a young staff officer quartered in a cottage near the garrison, and over whose mantelpiece waved a flag which his father had planted on the walls of Derne, and was returning to the barracks with an officer of dragoons. The wood through which our path led was extremely dark, and my companion carried a lantern. As we approached a postern, we were suddenly hailed in a low voice by some one near, and the rustling of the dead leaves indicated that footsteps were approaching. "Hist! are you coming?" whispered the stranger. "Deserters, by heaven!" exclaimed the officer, unlocking his arm from mine. "Stand forth, you scoundrels," added he, raising his lantern so as to throw its light for some distance around us. It fell upon a solitary figure, standing immediately in the path behind us. "J—s! its the *lef-*

ten-nant! and I took him for Smith," ejaculated a half-intoxicated dragoon, letting fall at the same time something which he carried under his arm. "Pick up your canteen, sir, and step in front of me," said the officer, sternly. The fellow obeyed like a piece of mechanism. "Forward!" cried his superior, and the culprit was handed over to the guard a moment afterward.

This was the first offence of the kind that had occurred in the company to which the man belonged, and his comrades, after the guard was turned out in the morning, asked permission, through an orderly, to award the punishment of the first soldier who had thus disgraced them. The boon, in consideration of their general good conduct, and by way of keeping up a high spirit in this new corps, was very properly granted. The penalty was soon announced to be "a ducking in the Mississippi." The officer in command of the division having approved of it, the company was formally drawn up upon the bank of the river; and three or four of the stoutest soldiers being detailed from the ranks upon the disagreeable duty, the strictest decorum was observed while the criminal expiated his offence by *washing* out the stain which he had brought upon his corps.

I passed an hour or two yesterday with General

A——, in superintending the opening of some ancient Indian graves in the neighbourhood; our search after relics having been immediately suggested by the general's gardener turning up accidentally a day or two since a large stone tomahawk, which, with another that would make a virtuoso's mouth water, was politely presented to me. The general's orderly, with a couple of privates armed with spades and pickaxes, was already on the spot, as we rode up to a prettily-wooded knoll near the river, when it was proposed to commence operations. The place was every here and there planted with flat stones placed each on end like a tombstone, but overgrown with moss, or sunken almost beneath the surface of the ground. A pair of these stones would stand opposite to each other with an interval of about four feet; the intermediate distance when excavated being found always to consist of a shallow basin, formed with considerable care of flat stones, but neither bones nor weapons were therein; and these singular cells not resembling in form the "*cachès*," in which the modern Indians secrete their corn beneath the earth, we were wholly unable to assign a cause for their construction, unless they had been actually the resting-place of bodies, so ancient as to have mingled entirely with their kindred dust.

I have been invited by several officers of the dragoons* to accompany them on the long march for which they daily expect to receive orders from Washington; and most gladly would I avail my-

* Many, alas! of these fine fellows, and among them at least one officer who was of the gay party described in the first part of this letter, are now no more. Instead of waiting until horses and men were gradually inured to the climate, this gallant corps, half disciplined, inexperienced, and ill prepared as they were, took the field and accomplished the object of their expedition, at the expense of nearly the destruction of the regiment. A late number of the Missouri Republican mentions that a hundred men and some of the most promising officers in the service have perished. It states that the dragoons while on the Pawnee Plains endured incredible hardships. They were frequently for many hours without water, or compelled to drink and cook with that which was found in puddles upon their way. We are told that "when they arrived at the Pawnee village, so destitute were they of provisions, that an order had been issued for the slaying of some of the equally famished horses, to provide a meal for the men. Under a burning sun, the fever which has since carried so many of them to the grave had already commenced rioting in their veins. Not more than 150 effective men reached this point. They found the Pawnees friendly disposed towards them,—their wants were administered to, and the men relieved by a stay of a few days. Meanwhile the neighbouring tribes of Indians were summoned, and came to a council, to the number of 3000 warriors; all of them mounted on fleet horses; their dark eyes glancing upon their visiters in no very gentle aspect; their arms and warlike instruments glistening in the sun; but, fortunately, the council closed peaceably. The dragoons returned to Fort

self of such an opportunity of seeing the prairies of the south-west; but they are expected to consume a year in their tour of duty among the wild tribes of that region, and I have made no arrangements for being so long absent from home. I must content myself with a trip up the Missouri, which I have projected with a friend at St. Louis, whither I shall return to-morrow, to avail myself of the first opportunity of making it.

Gibson, worn out and exhausted." They are now in winter-quarters, distributed, we believe, in three different garrisons on the frontier, instead of being concentrated, as they ought to be, at a post where they could have a school of practice for years to come. There are some hints in Lord Dover's lately published Life of Frederick the Great which show that an efficient cavalry force cannot be constituted in a day,—and which may be perused to equal advantage by those who would send green recruits among a nation of horsemen, and those who complain of want of efficiency in a corps which has as yet succumbed to nothing but climate.

LETTER XXXI.

Ohio River, March 25.

I waited some time at St. Louis, in the hope of being able to prosecute my tour farther westward, but ultimately failed in an application to the officers of the American Fur Company for a passage in one of their boats to the mouth of the Yellow Stone. The request was politely preferred for me by a gentleman interested in the Indian trade; and it has been intimated to me that it was refused because some of the association would not like "a chiel amang them takin notes." I regret the circumstance the more from having intended to avail myself of the cordial invitation of Major ——, of the Indian department, to pass a month with him at his station, far in the interior. Abandoning then this inviting excursion, I became impatient to take my passage for Cincinnati, until I found myself on a bright afternoon hauling out from the docks of St. Louis in a small and rather shabby-looking steamer; but which had a reputa-

tion for speed, and an active and gentleman-like master to recommend her. The piers at the time were crowded with other steamboats, either lately arrived from below, or about starting on their long voyage to New-Orleans: some that had come in the night before from Louisville were thronged with emigrants from every country, hastening to the exhaustless prairies of Illinois, or eager to distribute themselves along the turbid waters of the far-flowing Missouri. The hoarse panting of the high-pressure engines, the rattling of the drays on the paved wharves, and the discordant cries in every tongue mingling with the song of the negro boatmen, as their wild chant on coming into port would rise ever and anon above the general din, made a confusion of sights and sounds that was bewildering. At length we got fairly under way, the last adieux were made, and messages and commissions, deferred till the last moment, exchanged; the crew of our boat adding to the general concert by raising the customary river-chorus as they loosed her moorings from the shore. The grotesque gables and stuccoed parapets of St. Louis soon faded in the distance; the scattered and crumbling cottages of Carandolet were passed; and an hour after found us watching the proud ensign of Jefferson Barracks, as the Mississippi

swept us beneath the bold bluff from whose summit the standard is displayed.

A hundred tourists have put forth all their powers in describing the Mississippi; and the popular author of Cyril Thornton has lately succeeded so admirably, that my impressions in descending two hundred miles to the mouth of the Ohio will pass for nothing with you. I had already, as you well remember, seen the Mississippi several hundred miles farther up, where the river, with a much less body of water, is as wide as at New-Orleans, and where the majestic tide is so transparent and calmly flowing that it seems to claim no kindred with the great sewer of the south-west —the lengthened channel of the muddy Missouri, which with its turbid current and marshy shore should never have been identified in name with the Upper Mississippi. What affinity, indeed, can one trace between the boisterous torrent that whirls through the cypress swamps of Louisiana, and those pebbled waters, which, swollen by the pure snows of the north, come rolling from a thousand crystal lakes,* through rocky bluffs that lift their battlemented summits, like the towers of by-gone days, along the limpid tide, or lead off their gray

* See note I.

walls so far into the prairie that miles of meadow intervene between their base and the flower-kissed current? For one who has ever stood upon those cliffs, and looked down upon the soft meadow or clear depths beneath him,—there, where a hundred green islets, like the floating gardens of Montezuma, seem dropped upon the sunny surface; or, glancing from their imbowered thickets, has watched each salient point of the bold bluff opposite assume a hundred shapes, as the gorgeous clouds of sunset would drift over the pearly skies above him,—for one who has gazed upon this fairy landscape, even when winter has veiled its charms, the Lower Mississippi possesses but little attraction.

For many miles, indeed, below St. Louis there are some striking points occasionally occurring. The ridge of bluffs again appears below the "American bottom," and sometimes they approach the edge of the stream, till it whirls in boiling eddies around their irregular base. The numerous alluvial islands, too, borrow an air of grandeur from the Titan-like trees, whose ponderous limbs and lofty shafts seem to sustain the clouds above them; but I confess that to me half the interest attaching here to the river arose from association only. The mere idea of being upon a

stream that traverses such an immense extent of country that the productions of every climate flourish upon its banks is sufficiently impressive. But it is not until you think upon the lonely lakes of the north-west, from which the father of rivers derives his birth, and the tropical seas in which his waters lose themselves—upon the vast and fertile regions that intervene, and upon the tributaries, hardly second to himself, by which they are watered, that your mind takes in the full image of his grandeur. You see him, then, springing like a young warrior from the woods, with veins unpolluted by one bad commingling current, overpowering and annihilating a hundred opposing waters in his course, still without change or taint in character, until in fierce encounter with one rude and foul-mouthed rival—powerful as himself,—he vanquishes, indeed, but wears for evermore a sullen stain upon his features, and sweeps away a bloated conqueror, to hide his doubtful honours in the sea; and you follow the magnificent emblem of ambition on its far-reaching path, till your soul at last yields its homage to the mighty Mississippi!

Among the objects of interest pointed out to the tourist in descending to the mouth of the Ohio are some remarkable rock formations known as

the "Grand Tower," "The Devil's Oven," &c. The first of these is a lofty and detached crag of a cylindrical form, which stands out from the shore, and upholds its crown of rifted pines, regardless of the torrent that roars around its base. The other is a hemispherical cavity, hollowed out by the action of water in former days, and spacious enough for a holocaust of Chaberts, and as many beefsteaks as would satisfy the batch, to be baked together in. We stopped to take in wood, upon coming where the bank was again composed of alluvion; and I have seldom seen such wild and grotesque-looking creatures as issued from the edge of the forest when the boat approached the shore. The woodcutters of the Mississippi are as peculiar a race as were the boatmen whom the use of steam has driven from its waters. They rear their rude cabins chiefly in those places along the river which are too unhealthy to become settled by permanent and respectable occupants, and there, free from all control but that of their necessities, and exposed to the noxious exhalations of the swamps adjacent, they become alike uncouth in manners and unnatural in appearance. Their frames are shaken by fevers till the flesh departs from their rickety limbs; while the drooping rotundity of their persons in front contrasts strangely with the sunken

cheeks, whose hue seems still more sallow from the lank black hair that hangs in elf-locks over them.

I was standing near the quarter-rail, observing a group of these people with some curiosity, and immediately beside me the master of the steamer was entertaining some ladies, passengers, by pointing out the peculiarities of another group, when an exclamation of alarm from the females called my attention to a stout fellow in a hunting-frock who stood near a skiff on the river's bank, and waving a long and heavy staff in his hand as we neared the shore, called out to us in a threatening voice to "keep off." The words had not passed his lips, when the bow of the steamer approached near enough to the abrupt margin for one of the crew to leap to land with the bow-fast in his hand, the commotion occasioned by the wheels at the same time nearly swamping the little craft of the backwoodsman. The pole he held was instantly in requisition; and our boatman scarcely touched the earth, before a blow, that might have felled an ox, stretched him at full length upon it. A cry of indignation burst from our crew. "Excuse me, ladies," said the captain, politely touching his hat, while stepping back a pace or two he took his rifle from behind the

door of his private cabin, where it stood ready loaded. The shining barrel was levelled upon the assailant in an instant; in another he would have been in eternity; but, in the rapid succession of incidents, half of our crew had leaped ashore to succour the wounded man, and the intermingling of the different parties prevented the captain from drawing the trigger, even as his finger was upon it. Throwing up the muzzle of his piece, he now quickly gained the river's bank with the rest; and in the warm parley that ensued, it was only the unusual circumstance of there being but one rifle in a company of so many that prevented the effusion of blood. The backwoodsman thrice raised his quarter-staff, and thrice did the captain, retiring a step, place his rifle to his shoulder, with its muzzle within a foot of the other's mouth. At length, having completed taking in wood, the master again returned to the deck, attended first to the injured man, and then replacing his rifle, with an apology to the ladies for "so unpleasant an interruption," pursued the conversation as if nothing unusual had occurred.

I am now upon the beautiful Ohio, and revelling in the most delightful scenery in the world. The season is not quite advanced enough to show the river to the best advantage, but the opening of

spring shows itself in the tender leaflets of the cotton-wood and the tufted verdure of the hardy cane-brake; while the snowy blossom of the dog-wood can be seen far within the bosoms of the thinly-arrayed forest, and the joyous red-bud blooms over whole acres near the shore. Many of the trees on the river's bank are covered with the mistletoe, whose deep green clusters stand in bold relief upon the pale bark of the sycamore. It was an agreeable moment to me when our steamer wheeled around the marshy little peninsula of Cairo, and leaving the desolate tide of the Mississippi, I found myself once more upon this transparent water. The heavy forests of oak, and elm, and towering poplar did not indeed at first present much variety upon the level shores; but after passing the broad mouths of the Cumberland and Tennessee, with the large and beautiful islands at the embouchure of each, we came to those inaccessible perpendicular rocks* which the river

* The principal promontories of this range of cliffs are known as "Battery Rock," "Cave Rock," and "Tower Rock." On the summit of the latter there is said to exist an antique tumulus, partly constructed of large blocks of stone; but by whom erected, or for what purpose designed, tradition saith not. "Mounds or cairns of this kind," observes Mr. Schoolcraft, "are not unknown to other parts of the Mississippi Valley, although

washes above Golconda. Here the frowning precipices that gave dignity to the shore, and the green islets that diversified the bosom of the noble river, afforded a combination of the bold and beautiful such as is only met upon the Ohio,—such as, when the ample moon shone down on crag and stream and floating forest there, would realize all that poet ever dreamed of scenery.

Shawneetown and the sounding Wabash, with its wavy forests and grateful groves of Pekaun (*carya olivæformis*), were soon after passed, and the increased windings of the stream, with its picturesque alternations of "bluff" and "bottom"

the stones are not hewed or disposed with much regularity. But the most remarkable structure of stone of an antique character which the progress of settlement has yet disclosed, is undoubtedly that described by Dr. C. L. Beck (Gazetteer of Illinois and Missouri, Alb., 1823), as situated near Noyen Creek in Missouri."

The immense cavernous fissure known as Cave Rock, or "*Rock-Inn Cave*," is often visited by persons passing the Ohio. Its dimensions, as quoted in Schoolcraft's Travels, are—length, one hundred and sixty feet; width at the mouth, eighty-eight feet; height at the entrance, forty feet,—tapering gradually towards its termination. There is an unexplored fissure in the roof of this cavern. Popular tradition designates this cave as one of the haunts of a gang of robbers who formerly infested the Ohio; and its peculiar form has suggested one of his most agreeable tales to an admired Western writer.

—its steep conical hills nodding with unbroken forests, and fertile vales smiling with happy cultivation, beguiled our course, and soon brought us to the rapids, four hundred and fifty miles from the mouth of the river.

"The Falls of the Ohio," once so dangerous to the river-craft, are no longer among the objects of interest which meet the eye of the passing traveller on this route. They are now wholly avoided by the steamboat-canal, which, commencing two miles below Louisville, terminates at the wharves of that flourishing city. The work is a very complete one, and the solid finish of the masonry in the locks exacts a tribute of admiration from every one that avails himself of this great improvement in the navigation of the river. Our steamboat stopped for an hour at Louisville, and I seized the opportunity to ramble through the town. It is handsomely laid out, with broad and well-paved streets, compactly built with brick and stone. Some of the private dwellings have a good deal of style about them; and among the numerous hotels, there is one much superior in external appearance and interior arrangement to any establishment of the kind we have in New-York. The shops, which are large and airy, offer a very showy display of

goods; and the spacious and substantial warehouses, with the numerous drays continually passing to and fro, the concourse of well-dressed people in the streets, and the quantity of river-craft in front of the town, give Louisville the appearance of being the greatest place of business upon the Western waters.* There were several steamboats that arrived and departed even in the brief time that our boat lay-to; and when we again got on our way, it was in company with several others.

The wild beauties of the river had not lost their charms by this glance at the artificial attractions

* Louisville is the great commercial emporium of Kentucky. The Ohio at this point runs nearly due west, and the town faces the north, standing on a vast alluvial bottom, which, ascending from the shore, stretches out in every direction from the river. The population of Louisville is about 15,000. Among its public buildings are eight or nine churches, a theatre, high-school, United States Bank, Marine Hospital, &c. There are numerous steam-mills, an iron-foundry, cotton-factory, &c. in the place. The canal which connects the town with the river below the Falls is about two miles long; it is sufficiently deep to admit the largest steamboats, when the river is high enough for them to run. It has four locks, and overcomes a fall of twenty-two feet. The cost of constructing it is estimated at $730,000. The position of Louisville is about 38° 18′ north, and 8° 42′ west from Washington. It is 1448 miles, by the river, above New-Orleans, and five hundred and fifty-nine miles from Washington City.

of a flourishing town. The constantly interlocking promontories at each turn of the river make a sail up the Ohio appear like the passage through an interminable chain of lakes; and the new play of lights and shades, occasioned by the sudden change of the river's course, prevents its charms from becoming monotonous. I am now about five hundred miles from its mouth, and could the waning moonbeams that for so many nights have silvered its beautiful tide but play there for a month to come, I could float on thus for ever. Among my few fellow-passengers are two or three ladies, to whom I ought before to have acknowledged my indebtedness. A passionate lover of nature, like your friend, meets with few to sympathize fully in his tastes; but I have ever observed, that as among women one finds the quickest perception of the ludicrous in character, it is to them, too, you must look for the readiest appreciation of what is beautiful in nature or delicate in art. Their sensibilities, indeed, are not so deep, but their sympathies are keener and more quickly awakened than those of men; and the same vividness of apprehension which makes them jump to a conclusion in an argument, while our sluggish minds are toiling through the preliminary demonstration, exhibits itself alike

in detecting an absurdity in manners, or snatching a fleeting charm in the landscape from forgetfulness.

We have now passed the Miami, the last of the larger tributaries of the Ohio below Cincinnati, and our steamer will soon bring to at the mouth of the Licking River, opposite to that town. Both of these streams are famous in border-story; but the latter, from being opposite to old Fort Washington, upon whose site Cincinnati is built, has so many frontier-traditions connected with it, that I cannot, perhaps, more agreeably conclude this letter than with one of them. It is an oft-told story of the singular preservation of two wounded men, who encountered each other in the thick forests whose shadows formerly darkened the river at this point, after an Indian fight near the mouth of the Licking. These sole survivors of a bloody fray had each been disabled in a contest which was fatal to their companions. One had been shot through the hips, so as temporarily to paralyze both his legs; the other had both arms broken; yet each, after being struck down in the heat of the fight, had managed to crawl into an adjacent thicket, and so effectually to conceal himself, that the savages who had assailed their party, after scalping the fallen, departed and left their retreat uninvaded. Many hours inter-

vened, and apprehension kept each of the wounded men so silent that he was wholly unaware of the vicinity or even the existence of the other. At length, he who had the use of his arms, being pinched with hunger, ventured to shoot a rackoon which wandered near him. His former comrade called out at the report of the gun; but the other, fearing some Indian wile, refused to answer until the man presented himself before him. Mutual gratulation of course ensued; and then he that had the use of his legs kicked the rackoon towards the other, who, having flayed and cooked it, fed his companion. Their situation for pioneers after a battle seemed tolerably comfortable! but, unable to move from his sitting posture, he that was wounded in the hips must have perished from thirst, if the other, who was deprived of the use of his hands, had not taken his hat in his mouth, and, wading to his chin in the river, dipped up a cooling draught for his feverish friend. In this condition they are said to have remained for more than ten days; the walking gentleman driving turkeys and other game near enough for the sitter to shoot, and the sitting gentleman cooking the meals which the walker thus provided,—the latter in the mean time carrying the hat to the river as regularly as

a bucket to a well. Ultimately a boat descending the Ohio relieved them from their mutual offices, and both are said to have afterward recovered.*

* Metcalf's Indian Wars

LETTER XXXII.

Cincinnati, Ohio, April 3d.

It was a still sunny morning, when, in rounding one of those beautiful promontories which form so striking a feature in the scenery of the Ohio, we came suddenly upon a cluster of gardens and villas, which indicated the vicinity of a flourishing town; and our boat taking a sudden sheer from the shore, before the eye had time to study out their grouping and disposition, the whole city of Cincinnati, imbosomed in its amphitheatre of green hills, was brought at once before us. It rises on two inclined planes from the river, the one elevated about fifty feet above the other, and both running parallel to the Ohio. The streets are broad, occasionally lined with trees, and generally well built of brick, though there are some pretty churches and noble private dwellings of cut stone and of stucco. Of the latter there are several with greater pretensions to architectural beauty than any which I remember in New-York. The first impression upon touching the quays at Cincinnati,

and looking up its spacious avenues, terminating always in the green acclivities which bound the city, is exceedingly beautiful; and your good opinion of the town suffers no diminution when you have an opportunity to examine its well-washed streets and tasteful private residences. Of the rides and walks in the suburbs I cannot speak too warmly; the girdle of green hills already spoken of, on some of which the primeval growth of the forest still lingers in a clump of aged trees, command some of the most beautiful views you can imagine of the opposite shores of Kentucky, with the two pretty manufacturing villages on either side of the Licking River, which debouches opposite to Cincinnati. Cincinnati herself, with her twenty gilded spires gleaming among gardens and shrubbery, lies as if spread upon a map beneath you; while, before attaining this commanding height, you have already been rewarded, when winding up the steep ascent, by a hundred charming glimpses of groves and villas, scattered along the banks of the beautiful Ohio. Verily, if beauty alone confer empire, it is in vain for thriving Pittsburg or flourishing Louisville, bustling and buxom as they are, to dispute with Cincinnati her title of "Queen of the West."

The population of the place is about 30,000.

Among them you see very few but what look comfortable and contented, though the town does not wear the brisk and busy air observable at Louisville. Transportation is so easy along the great western waters, that you see no lounging poor people about the large towns, as, when business languishes in one place, and it is difficult to find occupation, they are off at once to another, and shift their quarters whither the readiest means of living invite them. What would most strike you in the streets of Cincinnati would be the number of pretty faces and stylish figures one meets in a morning. A walk through Broadway here rewards one hardly less than to promenade its New-York namesake. I have had more than one opportunity of seeing these western beauties by candle-light, and the evening display brought no disappointment to the morning promise. Nothing can be more agreeable than the society which one meets with in the gay and elegantly furnished drawing-rooms of Cincinnati; the materials being from every State in the Union, there is a total want of *caste;* a complete absence of *settishness* (if I may use the word). If there be any characteristic that might jar upon your taste and habits, it is, perhaps, a want of that harmonious blending of light and shade, that repose both of character and manner,

which, distinguishing the best circles in our Atlantic cities, so often sinks into insipidity, or runs into a ridiculous imitation of the impertinent nonchalance which the pseudo pictures of English "high life" in the novels of the day impose upon our simple republicans as the height of elegance and refinement. There is a common phrase in the new settlements of the West—"We all come from some place or another,"—which you may imagine to be particularly applicable to a place that only dates from the year of our Lord 1808; and it is therefore in the highest degree absurd to speak of the Cincinnatians as a provincial people in their manners, when the most agreeable persons that figure here hail originally from New-York or Philadelphia, Boston and Baltimore, and are very tenacious of the style of living in which they have been educated. The New-Yorker, for instance, plumes himself upon placing a bottle of Lynch's best before you; the Philadelphian on having a maître de cuisine who adds to his abstruser knowledge of the sacred mysteries the cunning art of putting butter into as tempting rolls as ever sported their golden curl upon a Chestnut-street breakfast-table; the centre table of the Bostonian is covered with new publications fresh from the American Athens; and you may be sure to find the last new

song of Bayley on the music-stand of the fair Baltimorean. I need hardly add, that the picture of life and manners here by an exceedingly clever English caricaturist has about as much vrai-semblance as if the beaux and belles of Kamschatka had sat for the portraits.

I have been here now nearly ten days, and scarcely an hour has passed without some gay and agreeable engagement. The acquaintance of Mr. K—— and Mr. P——, both formerly of New-York, and now distinguished members of the Ohio bar, inducted me at once into all the society of the place; my table was covered with cards on the morning after my arrival, and I see no end to the polite hospitalities of the place, should I prolong my stay.

A literary soirée and a sporting-club dinner would, perhaps, be two of the most characteristic circles into which I could carry you, but description would do nothing without the music that gave variety to the spirit of the one, or the delicious birds that lent a relish to the jokes of the other. As you may imagine, I was much more at home among the sportsmen than the literateurs; with the latter, in fact, I opened my lips but once in a learned discussion, and was so frightened at the sound of my own voice, that I took the earliest oppor-

tunity to escape from the premises. I have never affected *cliques* of any kind,—literary, fashionable, or political. Society is a salad, which to relish must be mixed from a variety of ingredients.

The principal buildings of Cincinnati, besides more than twenty churches, some of which are very pretty, and several fine hotels, one of which, the Pearl-street House, would rival the best in New-York, are the Cincinnati College, a couple of Theatres, four Market-houses, one of which is five hundred feet in length, a Court-house, United States' Branch Bank, Medical College, Mechanics' Institute, the Catholic Atheneum, the Hospital, and High-school, and two Museums. The collection of one of these museums is exceedingly interesting, from embracing a number of enormous organic remains among its curiosities, with antique vases and various singular domestic utensils, excavated from some of the ancient mounds in Ohio. In the upper story of the same building there is another exhibition, which, from the accounts I have had of it, I should hardly expect to be patronised in so enlightened a community :—it is nothing less than a nightly representation of the final place of torment in the other world, with all the agreeable accompaniments that the imaginations of the vulgar delight in conceiving as belonging to it. A very respect-

able man, whom I chanced to meet with long before reaching here, mentioned to me the existence of this piece of charlatanism, and dwelt upon it with great unction, from the "good moral effect it would produce!" Now, is it not surprising that the very persons who condemn theatrical representations are the ones of all others to countenance such gross and impious humbug? The success of such disgraceful mummery is, perhaps, the strongest argument that could be adduced in favour of a well-regulated stage. A passion for dwelling on the mimic world, presented by the drama, seems almost inherent in our nature; like all other strong predispositions, it is probably given for some useful purpose; and its perversion alone can be injurious. Indeed, there is no public diversion that could be devised more openly and immediately answerable to public opinion than the stage, or that can be more effectually restrained and regulated by the presence of the judicious; but if the moral and discriminating choose to think it beneath them to watch over and guard it, the trifling and the vicious will assume its management. You may talk, indeed, of putting it down entirely; but, alas for him who would put a padlock on a safety valve, or dam the current of folly without leaving a sluice-way!—the steam

that sings so quiet a tune by his parlour-fire may yet, when too closely pent, blow him to atoms; and the torrent to which he would deny an open outlet will ooze through a hundred hidden crevices, and sap the fabric he has built to restrain it.

The most remarkable, however, of all the establishments of Cincinnati are those immense slaughter-houses, where the business of butchering and packing pork is carried on. The number of hogs annually slaughtered is said to exceed one hundred and twenty thousand; and the capital employed in the business is estimated at two millions of dollars. Some of the establishments cover several acres of ground; and one of the packing-houses, built of brick, and three stories high, is more than a hundred feet long, and proportionably wide. The minute division of labour and the fearful celerity of execution in these swinish workshops would equally delight a pasha and a political economist; for it is the mode in which the business is conducted, rather than its extent, which gives dignity to hog-killing in Cincinnati, and imparts a tragic interest to the last moments of the doomed porkers, that might inspire the savage genius of a Maturin or a Monk Lewis. Imagine a long narrow edifice, divided into various compartments, each communicating with the other,

and each furnished with some peculiar and appropriate engine of destruction. In one you see a gory block and gleaming axe; a seething caldron nearly fills another. The walls of a third bristle with hooks newly sharpened for impalement; while a fourth is shrouded in darkness, that leaves you to conjure up images still more dire. There are forty ministers of fate distributed throughout these gloomy abodes, each with his particular office assigned him. And here, when the fearful carnival comes on, and the deep forests of Ohio have contributed their thousands of unoffending victims, the gauntlet of death is run by those selected for immolation. The scene commences in the shadowy cell, whose gloom we have not yet been allowed to penetrate. Fifty unhappy porkers are here incarcerated at once together, with bodies wedged so closely that they are incapacitated from all movement. And now the grim executioner—like him that battled with the monster that wooed Andromeda—leaps with his iron mace upon their backs, and rains his ruthless blows around him. The unresisting victims fall on every side; but scarcely does one touch the ground, before he is seized by a greedy hook protruded through an orifice below. His throat is severed instantly in the adjacent cell, and the quivering body is hurried

onward, as if the hands of the Furies tossed it through the frightful suite of chambers. The mallet,—the knife,—the axe,—the boiling caldron,—the remorseless scraping-iron,—have each done their work; and the fated porker, that was but one minute before grunting in the full enjoyment of bristling hoghood, now cadaverous and "chap-fallen," hangs a stark and naked effigy among his immolated brethren.*

* The Cincinnati correspondent of a Baltimore paper mentions in a letter which appeared while this sheet was going through the press, that "The whole number of hogs killed last year, in the city and vicinity, is ascertained to be a little rising *one hundred and twenty-three thousand.* Deer Creek is a stream running into the Ohio River on the eastern suburb of the city. About half a mile up this stream the slaughter-houses of Mr. Coleman are situated; and during the whole 'hog-season,' this stream, from the houses to the river, is running blood, and generally goes by the name of 'Bloody River.'

"From the slaughter-houses, the hogs are conveyed in large wagons, that hold from twenty-five to forty, to the various packing-houses, where they can pack, and have ready for shipment, *two hundred and fifty barrels of pork in one day.* It is, indeed, astonishing, the rapidity with which they put a hog out of sight, when once they get fair hold of him. As at the slaughter-houses, a perfect system is kept up; every man has his allotted duty to perform, and there is consequently no interference with each other; every thing goes on like 'clock-work.' When the hogs are received, they are first weighed by the weigher, then passed

There is more of eastern than of western genius —of the Yankee rather than the Kentuckian—in this systematic establishment, where the coarsest employment is thus reduced to mathematical precision. Indeed, the mechanical regularity, the neatness, and the enterprise of New-England characterize the people of Ohio generally, and constitute a marked difference between them and their neighbours over the river. The Kentuckians are chiefly descended from military men and hunters, who settled the broad and fertile tracts now so populous during and shortly subsequent to the Revolution; and wheresoever they wander in the far west, they are still distinguished by the traits that would naturally spring from such an origin. There is an off-handedness—if I may use the term—a fearless ardour, a frankness and self-possession about them that engages your good-will at once; while you are both interested and amused at the

to the 'blocking-men,' who place them on the several blocks (two are generally used), when they are received by the '*cutters*,' and are very quickly despatched,—the various qualities separated and thrown into their respective places. One man weighs for the barrels (two hundred pounds), and throws the meat into a '*salt-box*,' from which the '*packer*' receives it; and when the barrel is packed, it is handed over to the 'cooper,' who heads it. It is then bored, filled with strong brine, plugged, branded, and ready for shipment."

exaggerated tone of sentiment, half-romantic, half-vain-glorious, which their ideas and expressions betray. Judging, however, from the occasional specimens I have seen, I should think that though individually the most characteristic and interesting people in the Union, they are by no means such useful members of society as the New-Englanders. Indeed, it has more than once occurred to me, when I have seen two of these ultra specimens of the eastern and the western man settled down on the same prairie beside each other, that though entirely different, there could be no better representatives of genuine American character among the foreign emigrants whose cabins clustered around them. They are both sprung from a stock so ancient, and so slightly adulterated by European intermixture since the pilgrims first landed at Plymouth and the followers of Raleigh touched the shores of Virginia, that they represent the only homogeneous population on the continent. The southern parts of Ohio and Illinois are settled in a great measure by Kentuckians; but before I write to you again I shall have some opportunity of studying them in their own country.

LETTER XXXIII.

Lexington, Kentucky, April 7.

"No, stranger, there's no place on the universal 'arth like old Kaintuck: she whips all 'Out-west' in prettiness; and you might bile down cr'ation and not get such another State out of it."

Thus eloquently discoursed the boatman who ferried me over the Ohio a day or two since; and I confess that the fellow's panegyric upon his native State made me congratulate myself upon having extended my tour in this direction, and on the means I had adopted for meeting more often with originals like himself. Travelling on horseback is the best mode of seeing both the scenery and the people of the western country; and having bought a good hackney at Cincinnati, I promise myself much pleasure from this part of my western tour. My route will lead south-eastwardly through Kentucky as far as the mountainous parts of Tennessee, from which State I shall enter Virginia on its south-west corner, and finally take my

way to the north along the eastern base of the Alleghanies.

It was a beautiful day, that on which I left Cincinnati; and when, after crossing the Ohio at noon, I found myself upon the Kentucky bank of the river, and checked my horse to look back for a moment upon the noble town and the fair stream that bathed its walls, I could not but admit that the amphitheatre of green hills opposite to me did really shut in "The Pride of the West," if not the most beautiful city in the Union. But I confess I was not sorry to escape from its elegant and profuse hospitalities, and to find myself once more on horseback and alone, free to rove wherever fancy or caprice should lead me. The "voice of spring" had long been abroad in the land, and the perfume of blossoms and flowers that met my senses as I rode by the scattered gardens in the little town of Covington, seemed to rebuke the taste which had kept me so long within a city's walls. From a green knoll on the edge of the village I took my last look of the beautiful Ohio, and then pausing vainly a moment to catch the words of a song which a young girl was warbling to her piano in a pretty cottage near, I struck down the side of a grassy slope, and crossing a brook, soon found myself riding through a tall wood on the high-road

to Lexington. The evening soon after closing in, left me but little opportunity of observing the country, which appeared to be generally heavily wooded, and broken up into undulations so short and frequent as to make the office of ploughing the hill-sides no sinecure. The aspect of a broken country was so agreeable to me, however, after being so long upon the prairies, that I was not sorry to find but little alteration in the scenery, when I arose and advanced upon my journey the next morning. But for the present I was no longer solitary. I had not got a hundred yards from the house where I passed the night, before I heard a voice from an enclosure near the road calling out, "Halloo, stranger; I reckon you and I are cutting out for the same place; so hold on a bit, and you shall have some company." But before this considerate traveller could gain the road, I was overtaken by a young man of genteel appearance, who at once drew up by my side and entered into easy conversation, according to the custom of the country. After riding a mile or two together, he asked me if I would eat an apple, and, upon expressing assent, instead of drawing the fruit from his pocket, or saddle-bags, as I expected, I was not a little surprised to see him stop in front of a respectable-looking house, and halloo till half a dozen negroes

made their appearance from the log-cabins around the door. "Aunty," cried my companion, to an active-looking wench who advanced before the rest, "has your master got any apples in the house?"—"Only a few barrels left, young master."—"Well, then, bring us a dozen." A large basket, containing as many of the finest pippins as we could stow about our persons, was, a moment after, brought to the road-side and held up to us, as we sat on horseback; and, after dividing the contents between us, I was very naturally about to pay for them, but the young gentleman told me that I would only insult a decent farmer's family (not a soul of whom was known to him) by paying for what "no Kentuckian would be brute enough to refuse a stranger."

My companion soon after parted from me, and entering a deep wood, I was so much engaged in listening to the mellow whistle of the red-bird, and marking the shrubs and flowers that were putting forth their virgin blossoms around me, that I insensibly deviated from the turnpike (so called), and took a road which, after an hour's riding through a romantic forest, brought me up at last by a mill, where I learned how many miles I had wandered from the way. The beautifully secluded dell through which my path now led in recovering the

main road, left me nothing to regret in having thus added to my journey. It was watered by a deep brook, along whose steep banks the red-bud and the wild plum put forth their delicate blossoms in rich profusion, and the various singing-birds, which the glare of noon had driven from the road-side and open fields far into the forest, kept here the woods alive with music.

My path, at first but little more than a woodman's trail, widened at last into something like a wagon-road; and I came finally to a number of log-cabins, scattered along the road at some distance from each other. Near one of them, I was not a little struck at seeing an old gray-headed negro ploughing the few acres which surrounded the miserable shantee, while a stout, hale-looking fellow of forty was lounging indolently in his rude and dirty door-way. It was the first object I had seen to remind me unpleasantly that I was now in a slave State.

A pretty cottage, with some shrubbery around it, stood near the spot where I regained the high-way towards sunset; and near at hand was a small graveyard, protected from the road by a slight fence, with a rank growth of weeds along its border. Pausing a moment to observe the various rude memorials to the dead, that reared

their gray heads in the yellow sunlight, my attention was fixed by a young fair-haired girl of sixteen, kneeling by the side of a new-made grave, and bending her head towards the recent sod, apparently in an attitude of prayer. Upon looking more narrowly, however, I discovered that she was only engaged in planting flowers around a spot which was probably hallowed in her affections. Her bonnet was thrown back upon her shoulders; and there was nothing to screen her features from view except the long hair which waved in locks of gold on either side of her pensive countenance, which—so intently was she bent upon her graceful task—was only completely exposed when she raised her head, as if startled by the sound of my horse's hoofs, as I moved from the spot.

The evening had completely settled in upon the lower grounds, as I looked from an eminence down into the little valley whence rose the white chimneys of the house where I was to pass the night. It stood in straggling and broken form, one story in height, on the margin of a lively brook, which rattled along the base of the hill; the various buildings comprehended in the mansion making quite an imposing appearance as they extended their low and irregular front along the road-side.

There was a fence of rough slabs, whitewashed, about ten feet in front of the porch, with a number of logs of different lengths placed upright near it, to answer the double purpose of a horse-block to mount from and a stile to cross the fence with. A limping gray-headed negro received my horse at the door, while the landlord took my saddle-bags, and ushered me into a wainscoted and whitewashed chamber, where another traveller, who had arrived but a few minutes before me, was comforting himself with the contents of a pitcher of cider, which stood at his elbow. "Come, sir, come," he exclaimed upon my entrance; "come, sir, take a drink; this cider goes very well after an evening ride."—"Help yourself, stranger," added the landlord, "while I tote your plunder* into the other room." Then, while I joined the cider-drinker in his thin potations, the landlord soon returned, and finding that my immediate destination was Lexington, he told me, with an air of great satisfaction, that "I would have company all the way, for that that gentleman was going on in

* This use of the term "*plunder*" sounds whimsical to a northern ear, but the derivation of the word (from the Flemish *plunderen*, signifying property) implies the meaning that it has upon the western waters; and a similar phraseology is familiar to us from the Canadian "*butin*."

the morning." The other, a plain farmer, with whom I had now exchanged some commonplaces about agriculture, which nearly exhausted my stock of information on that subject, rejoined with animation that he was very glad I was going his way, as "he allowed the gentleman to be right good company, and he did not mistrust but what we'd have a tip-top time of it."

The faintest streakings of dawn were hardly perceptible in the east when our horses were brought to the door the next morning; and mounting by the light of the young moon, which showed like a mere gash in the blue vesture of heaven, we moved in a brisk trot from the door of the hostelrie. The twilight seemed to be losing its sombreness as we gained the top of the opposite hill; and then entering a wood of ancient beeches, the chirp of the gray squirrel, and the grating call of the ma-ma-twa, or cat-bird, impatient to commence his morning song, rivalling in sweetness the finest music of the woods, foretold the approach of day: and, indeed, the sun was already up, and the wild bee humming around the blossoms of a majestic tulip-tree, as we emerged from the forest beneath its gnarled branches, that extended across the road, and framed in a miniature view of cultivated country below us, whose aspect beneath the uprising sun was

perfectly delicious. "Save your praises, stranger, until you get twenty miles nearer to Lexington," cried my companion, as I gave loose to my admiration and delight in no measured terms. The scenery of this part of Kentucky reminded me much of that in the eastern section of Putnam county, in the State of New-York. There were the same abrupt hills, cultivated apparently to the utmost, wherever their inclination was not too great for the plough, and having all their steep places covered with a vigorous growth of forest trees, while at every interval between their bases some saucy brook would make its presence known as it capered along over the stones that paved its path to some more majestic and tranquil stream.

It was high noon when I approached the environs of Georgetown, and looked down from an eminence on the banks of the Elkhorn—a pretty winding stream about fifty yards wide—upon its beautiful race-course. It was a large meadow of the finest and firmest turf, studded here and there with noble elms and sycamores, the original growth of the forest, and having two sides bounded by the river, while thickly enclosed grounds, scattered copses, or sunny slopes, waving with new wheat, gave repose to the eye upon the remaining

two. The town itself looked very flourishing, and appeared to be well built, chiefly of brick; but wishing to reach Lexington early in the evening, I rode directly through it.

The country now became much more level, and the soil richer than any I had seen since crossing the Ohio. The enclosures, too, were all in better order, and I now, for the first time, saw some of those beautiful wooded pastures which, as they are the pride of Kentucky, are peculiar, I believe, to this State. An occasional villa, imbosomed in trees and shrubbery, was soon after observable. The distance at which they stood from the road indicated the taste of their proprietors in one essential point, while it left one to guess how it had displayed itself in others. The frequency of these tasteful residences continued increasing, until the collection at last assumed the appearance of a village; and finally, after travelling a few hundred yards on a Macadamized road, I found myself riding over paved streets through the beautiful town of Lexington; for the various gardens and shrubbery around the doors of the houses lead you so insensibly into the business parts of the town, that you are in the heart of the place before becoming aware that you have passed the suburbs. The town, which is regularly laid out upon a level plat

of ground, is well built of brick and wood, and has the sidewalks of its broad streets almost invariably lined with ornamental trees; so that, with the numerous vacant lots cultivated as gardens, and in which, even thus early, the song of the mocking-bird may be heard, Lexington approaches nearer to the *rus in urbe* than any town of its size that I have seen.

Soon after entering the place, my fellow-traveller drew up his horse by my side, and observing, "We must part here, perhaps never to meet again, stranger," he, for the first time, inquired my address, with some interest, and took a very kind farewell of me. He was a plain and unpretending man, in very moderate circumstances, and spoke upon few other subjects besides religion, slavery, and the state of agriculture in Kentucky; but the attention with which I listened to the exposition of his views, while studying him as a fair representative of one of the most important classes in the community, seemed sufficiently to have won his good opinion; and I must say, that if the yeomanry of Kentucky are generally gifted with the same conscientiousness and moderation, with equal liberality and desire for improvement, they will compare to advantage with the cultivators of the soil in any part of the Union. Nor have I as yet, since

crossing the Ohio, met with any of those "half-horse and half-alligator" characters, which, flourishing for a few years on the banks of the Mississippi, have now for the most part withdrawn themselves beyond the frontiers, or live chiefly in the imagination of those who confound the wild boatmen of the western waters with the far different people who dwell upon their borders.

I am now established for a few days at Postlethwaite's Hotel, in the centre of the city of Lexington, and will give you in my next the result of various excursions which I meditate in the neighbourhood.

LETTER XXXIV.

Frankfort, Kentucky, April 9th.

I was dining yesterday with some kind friends in Lexington (recent as is our acquaintance, their warm-hearted courtesies render it impossible for me to speak of them less familiarly), when it was pronounced impossible for me to leave this part of Kentucky without a peep at the capital, which was but a day's ride off. Accordingly, as Mr. ——, whose name is familiar to you as distinguished in Congress and at the bar, was going in the morning to attend one of the upper courts, now in session at this place, he was at once hunted up, an introduction procured me, and after an early breakfast, we started on horseback together. Our road lay chiefly through a level fertile country, in a very good state of cultivation; and my companion, who is one of the most prominent planters and agriculturists in this section of the country, took great pleasure in pointing out to me the most flourishing farms, and the peculiar growth of different soils, as we rode along; recalling at the same time, most

agreeably—as the railroad, now constructing between Lexington and Frankfort, occasionally intersected our route,—his early recollections of this region before such a convenience was dreamed of. The secluded appearance of the farm-houses, standing aloof from the road, with meadows, fields, and groves intervening, struck me very pleasingly; and about noon, passing the gate of an extensive planter, who was personally known to Mr. ——, he, much to my gratification, proposed a call upon his friend. Leaving the road, we entered at once upon a large and beautiful park or chase.* It was enclosed by a common worm-fence, but afforded some charming vistas among its noble clumps of trees, where a large herd of deer were browsing unmolested. This was the grazing portion of the farm, and the hardy *blue* grass, even thus early, afforded a rich sward beneath the boughs that were just putting forth their young leaves. Passing completely through this wooded pasture, we entered a square enclosure of some eight or ten acres of garden, lawn, and orchard combined, but not doing much credit to the characteristics of either, having a rectangular brick house placed formally in the midst, with

* Called "a cattle-range," if I mistake not, in Kentucky.

several negro-hovels about a stone's throw from the door. I had been so charmed with my ride through the cattle-range, that my expectations were very much raised, and I was not a little disappointed at the aspect of things here. I could not help, while we waited for the servants to take our horses, indulging my imagination in throwing down the nearest fences, and allowing the mansion to stand, as it ought, on the open verge, if not in the bosom of the park, from which it was thus tastelessly shut out. In the mean time half a dozen slaves, young and old, made their appearance, our horses were disposed of, and two tall and well-made Kentuckians, either of whom had counted, perhaps, five or six-and-twenty summers, saluted us at the door. My companion was received with a great deal of cordiality; and I was made at once at home. We dined with the young gentlemen, who, in the absence of the older members of the family, were keeping bachelor's hall together; and half a dozen plans were at once projected by them for making my time pass agreeably for a month to come. Nor would they hearken to the idea of my proceeding on with Mr. —— immediately after dinner. Most unwillingly, however, I was obliged to insist upon going. Our horses were saddled, while theirs, too,

were brought to the door; and descending, under the escort of our entertainers, a slight knoll back of the house, where a lively brook came singing from a rocky cave within a few yards of the door, we entered a wooded enclosure of about a hundred acres, separated by a fence from the woodland pasture around. Here a herd of *elk*, startled by the sound of our horses' feet, reared their tall figures from the patches of underwood, and banding together in a moment, scampered after their antlered leader. The enclosure was so limited that it was easy to keep them in sight; and I tried the powers of my horse by once or twice putting him to the top of his speed after these long-legged gentry. My hospitable entertainers took the opportunity to press me again to remain at least a few days with them, adding the strong temptation of an elk-hunt on horseback, as one of these fellows when turned out in the range would afford superb sport: but I had already, before leaving Lexington, entered into engagements which compelled me to forego the pleasure. The attentive young Kentuckians accompanied us through the plantation until we came out on the highway; and finally, with one more attempt to detain us, we were dismissed upon our journey, after a promise was exacted from me that

I would not return that way without at least passing a night with them. The elk that I had seen here, which apparently bore about the same proportion in size to some deer that were feeding near them, that one of the latter would to a fox—I might almost say a hare,—were prized by their owner, as a remnant of the race once so numerous in Kentucky, and now only found in its wild state in the North-west Territory, or far over the Mississippi. Like the moose—to which they are so nearly allied in size and appearance, the palmated horns of the latter being, I believe, the most distinguishing mark between them—the elk has rapidly retired before the advances of civilization. The moose, indeed, may still be found occasionally among the wild hills about the sources of the Hudson, in the State of New-York: but the elk seems to have gone westward with the buffalo; nor do I ever remember to have heard of any being taken on our eastern waters. A score of these majestic-looking fellows would form a noble appendage to the ornamental grounds of some of the old seats on the Hudson. I think them more interesting in appearance than the buffalo; half a dozen of which I have seen grazing together on the estate of the gentleman with whom I was now travelling. He was at considerable pains to procure a pair from the

far west for the sake of experimenting on a cross with the domestic cattle, which, contrary to the theoretical surmises of some of the greatest naturalists, has fully succeeded; and Mr. W. can now show half-blooded cows in his pastures of the third generation. They are the most uncouth-looking objects you can conceive of. The experiment, which is a very interesting one, must have been attended with a great deal of expense in procuring the wild buffalo from so great a distance: but no attention paid in Kentucky to the rearing of stock is thrown away; and you may here see some of the finest cattle and the most beautiful pastures in the world. This placing their chief dependence upon flocks and herds gives something patriarchal to some districts of Kentucky; and the existence of slavery within her borders, though generally allowed by the intelligent to be an evil, and one of which they are really desirous to rid themselves, does not detract from that character in the rural population. The condition of the negroes in servitude is so easy, that to call one a "*free nigger*" is the highest term of reproach among them. They appear to be very much attached to their masters, and a familiarity exists between them which would be fatal to all discipline in the ordinary relations of master and servant. The latter

relation of society, indeed, as compared with that of owner and slave, may be likened to the different footing upon which a subaltern and a general officer may place themselves with a common soldier: he in whom the supreme command is vested may safely imitate the great Frederick or Napoleon, and joke with his troops as "Fritz," or the "little corporal;" while the subaltern can never with propriety relax the necessary etiquette with those who tread so closely upon his heels.

It was about dusk that we approached the capital of Kentucky, which lies so deeply buried in a gorge of hills that almost the first view you have of the town is by looking into its chimneys. The Kentucky River, cutting its way through precipitous limestone banks, makes a bend here through a complete circus of romantic-looking knolls about three or four hundred feet high: between the base of these and the bank of the river on either side is a level amphitheatre, upon which the town is built. The two divisions—Frankfort and South Frankfort—contain together about 4000 inhabitants. The view of the place from the bluffs above,—with its rectangular squares mapped out beneath you; the marble state-house raising its Ionic portico, like a Grecian temple, in the midst;

and the gray-stone penitentiary, with its castellated walls, thrown in the deep shadow of the hill-side,—is, at early dawn, or beneath the approaching twilight, exceedingly beautiful. I first viewed it at the latter hour, when winding down the steep declivity back of the town. We entered the place last evening, and this morning I have crossed the river, and rambled over the opposite hills on horseback, in order to enjoy a similar prospect. The town, from whatever point of view you observe it, preserves the same peculiar appearance as it lies nestled, as it were, among its steep hills.

The situation of Frankfort is, indeed, remarkable in the extreme; but of late years, a new interest for the passing traveller has attached to the place, from its having been the scene of one of the deepest domestic tragedies of ancient or modern times. The theme of Beauchamp and his wife, which, during the trial of the former, seven or eight years since, so filled the newspapers, must be familiar to you, though you cannot perhaps recall the particulars of the thrilling tale. In the lighter tone of society that prevails in our Atlantic cities, incidents like these, as they could never there occur, seem, from the exaggerated sentiment and romantic rashness of disposition they betray, as belonging to a bygone age, or transpiring in a different planet. They

are dwelt upon in a passing conversation as "singularly odd," and "very eccentric;" and are then superseded by inquiries about the stocks, or a learned discussion in relation to the opera. They may awaken a momentary interest, but are soon forgotten among the diversity of more congenial subjects that force themselves upon the attention. But among a people so earnest in character as the Kentuckians, and in a community whose sympathies have been outraged by such a mingled tissue of monstrous guilt and romantic infatuation, it is far otherwise. The tragic fate of "Beauchamp and his wife" sinks more deeply into men's bosoms; and the story of their strange loves, of her cruel wrong and his dark revenge, of the savage retribution they exacted from the author of their misery and their crime, and the touching heroism of the death they shared at last together—all combine to make up a drama of real life which can never be forgotten among the scenes where it was enacted.*

I shall return to Lexington this evening; and when you next hear from me, I shall be on my way to the "Forks of the Kentucky"—one of the wildest and most romantic parts of that State. Professor

* See note K.

L——, of the Transylvania University,* an accomplished young German, is to be my companion. Mr. L——, who, to many other acquirements less common in Kentucky, adds that of being an excellent rifle-shot, is led away by his love of scenery and of sporting; and I promise myself a great deal of pleasure from his society.

* The flourishing collegiate institution of Lexington so called.

LETTER XXXV.

Forks of the Kentucky, April 12th.

After settling with mine host on the day that I left Lexington, a black groom brought my horse to the door, and flinging my cloak and valise across the saddle, I rode over about noon to the house of a friend in another part of the town, where an early dinner had been courteously provided solely for myself and the new travelling-companion mentioned in my last; and our time not allowing us to pay that devotion to the excellent Madeira and old sherry which their richness and flavour would naturally claim, a bottle of each was quietly deposited in a basket with some other accompaniments, and a servant despatched by our kind entertainer to guide us on the first stage of our journey.

Emerging soon from the beautiful environs of Lexington, we rode for an hour or two through narrow roads, where the moist rich soil was fetlock-deep for our horses. But the enclosures, which were generally shut in by a worm-fence on either side, were exceedingly beautiful; and the

woodland and arable were so intermixed, that the tall and taper trees of the former, now ranging in open avenues along a hill-side, and now disposed in clumps upon the meadows, as if set there by the eye of taste, produced the impression of riding through a magnificent park, whose verdant swells and imbowered glades had been only here and there invaded and marred by the formal fences drawn through them.

Sunset found us upon the banks of the Elkhorn, and we crossed the stream near "Bryant's Station," one of the most celebrated spots in the annals of "The Dark and Bloody Ground."* The stockade fort that once stood here was frequently a refuge from the savages in the early settlement of the adjacent country, and its gallant defence by a handful of pioneers against the allied Indians of Ohio, led on by the white renegadoes Girty and M'Kee, was one of the most desperate affairs in the Indian wars of the West. The enemy banded

* The fair portion of Kentucky known by this significant title is said to have been distinguished by a similar term even before the appearance of the whites. It was the favourite hunting-ground of the Virginia and Ohio Indians, and the scene of continual strife between the warlike bands that wandered thither to arouse the buffalo from the cane-brakes, or chase the elk over the extensive "barrens" of Kentucky.

together at the forks of the Scioto, and planned their attack in the deep forests, a hundred miles away from the scene where it was made. The pioneers had not the slightest idea of their approach, when, sudden as the grove of spears that sprung from the dragon's teeth in classic land, a thousand rifles gleamed in the cornfields one summer's night. That very evening the garrison had chanced to gather under arms to march to the relief of another "station" that was similarly invested. It was a fearful moment: an hour earlier, and the pioneers would have been cut off,—an hour later, and their defenceless wives and daughters must have been butchered or carried into captivity, while their natural protectors were hurrying to the rescue of others. The Indians saw at a glance that the moment was not propitious to them; and having failed in surprising the Kentuckians, they attempted to decoy them from their fastness by presenting themselves in small parties before it. The whites were too wise to risk a battle, but they knew not how to stand a siege. The "fort"—which was merely a collection of log-cabins arranged in a hollow square—was unhappily not supplied with water. They were aware that the attacking party knew this; they were aware too that their real force lay in ambush

near a neighbouring spring, with the hope of cutting off those who should come to remedy the deficiency. But the sagacity of a backwoodsman is sometimes more than a match for the cunning of an Indian, and the heroism of a woman may baffle the address of a warrior. The females of the station determined to supply it with water from this very spring! But how? Woman's wit never devised a bolder expedient,—woman's fortitude never carried one more hazardous into successful execution. They reasoned thus: The water must be had. The women are in the habit of going for it every morning. If armed men now take that duty upon them, the Indians will think that their ambuscade is discovered, and instantly commence their assault. If the women draw the water as usual, the Indians will not unmask their concealed force, but still persevere in attempting to decoy the defenders of the station without its pickets. The feint succeeded; the random-shots of the decoy party were returned with a quick fire from one side of the fort, while the women issued from the other, as if they apprehended no enemy in that quarter. Could aught be more appalling than the task before them? But they shrink not from it; they move carelessly

from the gate,—they advance with composure in a body to the spring,—they are within point-blank shot of five hundred warriors. The slightest trepidation will betray them—the least apparent consciousness of their thrilling situation, and their doom is inevitable. But their nerves do not shrink; they wait calmly for each other until each fills her bucket in succession. The Indians are completely deceived, and not a shot is fired. The band of heroines retrace their steps with steady feet,—their movement soon becomes more agitated, —it is at last precipitate. But tradition says that the only water spilt was as their buckets crowded together in passing the gate. A sheet of living fire from the garrison, and the screams of the wounded Indians around the spring told that they were safe, and spoke the triumph of their friends. Insane with wrath to be thus outwitted, the foe rushed from his covert, and advanced with desperation upon the rifles of the pioneers. But who could conquer the fathers and brothers of such women? The Indians were foiled; they withdrew their forces; but on counting the number of their slain they burned with vengeance, and rallied once more to the fight. They were again and again repulsed. Succour at last came to the pio-

neers, and the savages were compelled to retreat to their wild-wood haunts once more.*

The peaceful aspect of this spot, as twilight now settled over the landscape, afforded a strong contrast to the wild encounters of which it had been the scene. We were in a celebrated grazing district, and entering the gate of a plantation at evening, this park-like scenery continued to grow upon us. There were neither roads nor lanes through the plantations, but the respective owners having merely an open right of way through each other's grounds, nothing could be more devious than our route from gate to gate. It lay chiefly through the wooded pastures for which Kentucky is so celebrated, and the fresh young grass was at this early season like an elastic carpet beneath our horses' feet. The new foliage of the spring was still too tender to rustle in the evening breeze, and the moonbeams, which silvered the sweeping cones of the maple-trees, and played through the acacia's slender screen, fell soft as sleep upon the greensward. Sometimes the frequent clumps would thicken into groves, whose depths it was idle to attempt to pierce; and then again, where a rich fringe of underwood indicated the bank of a rivulet,

* See M'Clung's "Sketches of Western Adventure," for a minute account of this affair.

enormous vines, pendent from some ancient walnut, would fling their verdurous canopy over its fountain-head.

After fording a number of fine brooks, whose full currents more than once washed our saddle-girths, we came at last to our destination for the night. It stood upon an eminence; a spacious old-fashioned building, erected during the early settlement of Kentucky, and now in a state of considerable dilapidation. Our black guide, who was an old family-servant, well known to the proprietor, was our only letter of introduction; and the hospitable manner in which we were received and made at once at home showed that we needed no more. The young planter, our host, was of an old Virginia family, and the room in which I slept was decorated with several family pictures in the costume of Charles the Second's time, whose faded colours and tarnished frames were in better keeping with the ancient exterior of the dwelling than the neat apartment wherein I passed the night.

After an early breakfast, our horses were led to the door by three slaves; our entertainer's, a fine blooded gelding, having his saddle covered by a bear-skin, of which his master's rifle had robbed the original owner. All being ready for mounting, it was not yet without considerable difficulty that

we got permission to start—our friendly host, who the night before would scarcely hear of our leaving him in the morning, still insisting upon our "giving him at least a few days."

An hour after found us riding through a country of the same character as that already described, but the land beyond it seemed to lie in ridges against the sky; and ascending one of these, we saw for the first time a blue line of mountains darkening the horizon. It was so long since I had seen any thing of the kind, that I confess the effect upon me was almost thrilling. The sweeping prairies, the broad rivers, and magnificent vegetation of the West were at once forgotten; I thought only of the pine-covered mountains of my native State, the rocky banks of its gushing streams, and the lonely lakes from which they take their rise; and I felt the while an indescribable longing to be "over the hills and far away." Those blue summits before me were the spurs of the Alleghanies; and though the main chain was yet hundreds of miles in advance, with a dozen intervening ridges of as many different names between, it was something, at least, I thought, to be once within their cool defiles. I now write to you from one of their inmost glens, and the feeling has hardly abated. To realize the delight I take in their rough embraces, you must,

whatever may be your love of mountain-scenery, have passed months upon the smooth prairies, or floated for weeks along the alluvial-banked rivers of the West.

From this point we rode for a short distance over a very indifferent soil, through a wood of oaks, in the centre of which we came to a spot that will, probably at no very distant day, be celebrated as a place of public resort. On the banks of a clear brook that winds through the forest there are no less than four or five mineral springs within as many rods of each other, and each of a different quality. The two which have attracted most attention are a sulphur and an oil spring; the last of which, from the quantity of oleaginous matter always floating upon its surface, is quite a natural curiosity. The proprietor, who contemplates creating an establishment upon the spot, lives in a log-hut near the springs, and treated us very hospitably. His little establishment was neatly ordered; and he set before us a most acceptable repast of fish, ham, eggs, and coffee, for which he would not hear of receiving compensation.

The day by this time was half-spent, and our host of the night before, having out of mere politeness accompanied us thus far on our way, was compelled to return. He insisted, however, upon

piloting us out of the wood, and then taking a kind farewell, he struck the rowels in his blooded horse, who, unembarrassed by the baggage which encumbered our patient roadsters, wheeled with a snort upon his hind legs, and was instantly lost in the forest from which we had just emerged.

The country became now more and more broken, and less suited to cultivation, but watered by numerous rills from the hill-sides; the feeders, probably, of a turbid torrent called the Red River, to whose banks we came just after sunset. The ferry-scow had been carried away by a recent freshet; and urging our horses to the rushing brink, we were only prevented from trying to ford or swim the stream by a number of persons who hurried to the spot from a mill hard-by, and begged us to desist. How to get over though, otherwise, was the question; and it was so rapidly growing dark that each moment rendered the delay more disagreeable. But the difficulty was soon solved by a by-stander; who, guiding us to a spot farther up the stream, where he kept a canoe, it was soon loosed from its moorings, and placing our valises and horse-furniture on the bottom, we crossed one at a time, swimming our horses over beside the canoe. They both in succession landed safely, though

the office of getting them up the steep and slippery bank on the opposite side was somewhat difficult. It was quite dark before we re-saddled and started anew; and after dodging about for some time in the woods to find our road, we discovered by the moon, as she got above the tops of the trees, the print of a wheel in the bed of a brook, and followed this novel kind of turnpike up, until we came to the house of a tanner, where we obtained permission to pass the night. We were now entering what is called the knobs of Kentucky; a part of the State but little settled, and barren in comparison with the populous and fertile districts I had hitherto visited. Being off the main roads, too, the accommodations are of course very different from what may be found upon more travelled routes, and my companion and myself were both compelled to take upon ourselves the duty performed by slaves the night before, and feed and groom our own horses. L., however, I find, has all the adaptability about him required on such a tour; and as for myself, you know, I've been long since broken in.

Rising with the sun, the next morning found us by breakfast time in a little village called Irvine. It was small and, to appearance, any thing but flourishing; but its singular seclusion among these

lonely hills, with the bright green Kentucky —now for the first time crossing our route— flowing in front, had a pleasing effect. There was a new store lately opened in the place; and stopping to purchase some trifles to the amount of a few shillings, the proprietor was so punctilious as actually to give a bill of sale for the amount, from which you may draw your own conclusion as to the customary business of the place. L. and myself had both a shrewd suspicion that we had added not a little to the capital of the town. I should not like the place the less, though, for wanting the bustle of more active life; and upon the whole, when I recall its appearance as it broke upon me from the top of a neighbouring hill, a day or two since, with the pale blue smoke curling up from its scattered chimneys, and courting the kindred mist that hung upon the wooded brows of the pyramidal hills around, I don't know what more quiet disposition I can make than to leave you till my next letter in the little town of Irvine.

LETTER XXXVI.

Forks of the Kentucky, April 13.

Our route from Irvine left the Kentucky River on the left, and we very soon entered the "knobs," or pyramidal hills, I described in my last, as looming like mountains at a distance. I had in fact thought that we were already in their bosom; but the first steep ascent of some three hundred feet by a bridle-way which some upstart mountain-torrent, called into brief existence by the spring rains, had appropriated just long enough to gash into lean gulleys filled with rascally cobble stones, removed that impression. Gaining the top with some difficulty, we found ourselves upon a narrow serpentine ridge covered with chestnuts and stunted pines; our pathway affording, in its devious course, some very pretty views of patches of cleared and partially cultivated land below us, lying often in small amphitheatres, formed by the gentle curve of the main ridge and the sudden intersection of others that traverse the country, or heave up singly from the plain. After a while

the road became more rocky, and then began to descend, until, almost unconsciously, we found ourselves near the bottom of a magnificent mountain glen,—a cavernous gorge among the hills with more than one feature about it, to remind one of the rock-ribbed abode of the freebooter in "the heart of Mid-Lothian." It was divided in the midst by a roaring stream, which seemed to gush from the mouth of a cave at the upper end—a broad plateau of rock projecting from the mouth of the cavern throwing the water like a spout far in advance, and sending it leaping like "a thing of life" along its rocky channel. On the left, the evergreens and thick underwood depended so heavily from the steep bank as almost to cover the stream, but on the right the rock rose sudden and bare. A broken wall with detached crags projected continually in advance, leaving room, where the fragments were displaced, for many an aged chestnut to find nourishment for its roots, and fling wide its shadowy branches. Upon this side, cut out of the rocky hill, and winding among the clefts and detached pieces of rock, lay the path up which we forced our horses. The ease and spirit with which they accomplished their task when once fairly started, convinced me that one may climb almost anywhere with a horse, if properly man-

aged. L. preferred leading his nag, and went ahead to explore, but my animated little fellow could not be restrained when he heard the echoing shouts from above, and allowing him to have his own way entirely, he pressed forward and carried me as safely to the top of the gorge as if we had been swung up together. Once clear of the ravine, the view that awaited us above was worth all the toil of struggling through it, if that had not already been repaid by its own scenic charms. Our road lay immediately on the edge of a precipitous wall; and four hundred feet below, the Kentucky, here broad, clear and placid, kept its way through a rich alluvial bottom. It was nearly dark when we effected our descent from the rocky bluffs to the arable flats below, at a place called "Rockshoal Mills," where we expected a cottager of the name of *Lutzow* to entertain us for the night. Stopping at a rude enclosure which surrounded the first log-dwelling we came to, our hallooing for some time only brought a posse of angry dogs about us, and then out came the owner of the mansion, hardly more hospitable. It was too dark to see his face, but our parley with him was to this effect:—"Good evening, sir, can you keep us here for the night?"

"Why, I reckon not, stranger; my house is small, you see, and it's full already."

"We care not for any thing but shelter and food for our horses, which are nearly knocked up."

"Well, now I allow you'll be much better accommodated about a mile ahead, just over the hill there; you could see the place if you were on the top,—that is, if it was not so dark."

This hint was not to be mistaken; and turning the heads of our unwilling horses, we descended into the bed of a deep and rapid brook; and climbing a precipitous bank, after proceeding about a hundred yards, a rugged path, through a thick wood of stunted growth, brought us, after dodging about half an hour in its defiles, to a cabin on the brow of the hill along whose rough sides we had been for some time riding. A lad of sixteen, lightly dressed in loose drawers and a hunting-shirt, came to the door with evident unwillingness, after we had exercised our lungs for some time in stirring up the establishment. He stood in the entrance with one hand upon the half-open door, while the other seemed to be employed in keeping back a very pretty girl about his own age, who stood peering curiously over his shoulder, while she shielded with an old bonnet the flaring tallow candle that "shed its light" with any thing but "hospitable ray" across the humble threshold. All our suing for admission was vain; the lad's

father and mother were absent, and had told him to admit no strangers to sleep in the house. We offered him money most liberally, and urged that the night was such as it would be cruel to turn a dog from the door, but it produced not the least effect; he only told us that the house we had passed was better able to take us than his father's; and that there was still one about a mile ahead, where we might get in; winding up every time with, "It don't signify, strangers, anyhow; if this was my house, I'd try and accommodate you, and so would father; but father's not here, and you can't come in."

I admired the boy's firmness, even while cursing the occasion of his constancy: but there was no help for us, unless we took the house by storm; and with some difficulty urging our horses from the door, we descended a steep bank, as the lad had directed us, and found ourselves in a few moments floundering in a swamp at the bottom. The night was pitchy dark, and the rain and wind seemed utterly to confuse our horses, to whose sagacity we surrendered ourselves, in tracking out the way. But when the point proposed was at last attained, our condition was but little bettered; a noise that would have awakened the seven sleepers failed to arouse the worthy housekeeper that we were about

to honour as guests: his name, also,—like that of the hospitable individual two miles back,—chanced to be *Lutzow*, and Koerner's free companions on a charge could not have cried it more lustily. The woods rang with our shouts and hallooing; but the echo of our own voices coming back in the gusts that swept the hill-side was the only reply vouchsafed to us. We determined, at last, to sleep in the woods; but having no conveniences for camping out, thought it better, at least for the sake of our horses, to try the boy once more. I confess, however, that I was so exasperated at the stolid selfishness of the last party whose hospitality we had so vainly invoked, that riding as near as possible beneath the only window in the house, I first raised a clatter with the butt-end of my gun, that would have shaken the sleeping efficacy out of a vial of the strongest opiate had it stood near; and then, when not a doubt remained that my words would not be thrown away, I thanked the inmates of the house for their politeness, in terms sufficiently vivid to impress the recollection of our nocturnal visit upon their minds. This acknowledgment made, we commenced our retrograde movement; but choosing the rocky hill-side in preference to the tangled swamp at the bottom, we bounced about among broken cliffs and fallen

trees with an agility and success that would have made the three Diavoloes eat themselves with vexation and envy, could this celebrated house of leapers have witnessed the various feats that we lavished upon the darkness. Among the rest, I was not a little amused when L., more keen-sighted than myself, insisting upon choosing the path, which I left wholly to my horse to find, mistook the phosphorescent trunk of a decayed tree for the gleam of a slimy and level path, and impelling his horse upon the narrow causeway, as it shot out from the hillside on which it had fallen, proceeded to dance a pas seul on the slippery timber. A few steps, a mere flourish on the deceitful path, carried horse and man head over heels several yards down the hill in a moment; and, as you may well imagine, it was a moment of intense anxiety to me, when I heard the branches crashing and the stones rolling beneath the hoofs of my friend's unfortunate courser, as he struck out on every side to arrest his downward progress. The activity of L., however, embarrassed as he was with his long heavy rifle and various accoutrements, soon brought him to his feet; he shouted cheerily from below, and passing his hand over his horse's limbs to assure himself that none were broken, mounted again, and we pursued our way in parallel lines at some dis-

tance from each other. Endeavouring to unite again, we became inextricably confused among a mass of trees lately felled. "Lutzow's wild chase" (the great partisan major never took a wilder one) was at last up—we could no more; but seeing a faint light gleaming through the trees on a high bank above us, we shouted lustily for a light. We were answered by the lad who an hour before had denied us admission to his house, and in a few minutes a dozen pine-torches, in the hands of as many half-naked children, showered their red light from the steep bank, and flashed upon a broad rivulet that crept through the heavy underwood beneath it.

"Stranger," shouted the noble boy, "hold on till I come below. I haven't been able to sleep since I turned you from the door; and, come what may, you shall share what we've got to-night."

A single toss of his torch threw the light, as he finished speaking, upon a bold rock below him, and leaping upon the narrow but firm foothold, he let himself down into the copse below, bounded over the brook, and was by our side in a moment. The other children, approaching the edge of the bank, threw the glare of their blazing pine-knots over a narrow and more circuitous pathway; while, marshalled by their elder brother, we scrambled up

the ascent, and soon gained the house. A few moments sufficed to secure our horses in the miserable collection of logs that served for a stable. There was nothing but a bundle or two of dried fodder for them to eat, but we endeavoured to make up for the want of more substantial refreshment by rubbing them well with corn-cobs, which, you must know, are a tolerable substitute for both wisp and brush in grooming. But the warmth created by the exercise did not make a share of the children's beds less acceptable, when, stripping off our wet clothing, we bestowed ourselves supperless beneath the covering.

LETTER XXXVII.

Clay County, Kentucky, April 13.

The lad to whom we had been indebted for a night's shelter made every possible apology, the next morning, for our meager entertainment, by pleading extreme poverty; notwithstanding which, we found it very difficult to force any remuneration upon him. The day was unfavourable for travelling, but, though not in any way pressed for time, we were compelled by the want of forage to change our quarters. A romantic ride along the cliffs of the Kentucky brought us at seven or eight o'clock to a miserable shantee, adjacent to a coal mine at the forks of the river, whence the coal is floated down in flat boats to Frankfort. The shantee appeared to be tenanted solely by three or four negroes; but upon approaching the door, a respectable looking man came to the threshold, and invited us in out of the rain. It proved to be one of the proprietors of the mines, who represented himself as having been a British soldier taken prisoner in the last war; but his language

and address were altogether those of a western American. By the kind offices of this person, we were provided with a breakfast of coarse pork and bread made of Indian corn, pounded between two stones by the fireside—a meal-making operation that consumed some time. I confess that in all the various tables I have sat down to, none required more of the Spartan's seasoning than this. I was really glad to wash down the coarse and greasy mixture with a bowl of sour milk, and betake myself once more to the saddle.

We returned now a mile or two nearly on our tracks, except that our path, instead of leading along the summit of the rocky and pine-covered bluff of the river, conducted us through a narrow but rich alluvial bottom at the base of the precipice, where the weeping branches of the wych-elms drooped far over the smooth deep tide, while a profusion of vines of every description hung in festoons along its margin. It was here that, while ferrying over the Kentucky, I could not help observing the happy effect produced by the full deep river, flowing so calmly between banks that seemed to have been torn asunder to afford it a passage. Each mountain torrent from the cliffs around clamoured like a noisy demagogue as it rushed from the woods into the sunlight; but the

proud stream only absorbed its boisterous current in silence, and then, like a lofty mind in a public station, reposing on its own truth,—alike beneath the shadow of impending cliffs or over the bed of treacherous quicksands,—swept upon its noiseless but resistless way.

After gaining the right bank of the river, our path was only the bed of a rushing brook that cut its way through a defile in the hills, and we soon, from diverging into its tributary rills, became totally lost. The rain came down in torrents, and we were glad to reach, about mid-day, what in the language of the country is called "a dead settlement." It was a cleared spot of about fifty acres, upon a piece of alluvial land, scooped out of the hill-side, and having a ruinous log-hut within a few yards of a brook which formed one of the boundaries of the deserted farm. Relieving our horses as quickly as possible of their furniture, one of us drove a couple of stakes in the ground, and tethered them among the long neglected grass; while the other proceeded to strike a fire and make things comfortable within-doors.

The house, which consisted of but one room, had, from appearances, already served others, as we were now using it, for a temporary refuge, as about half the floor seemed to have been consumed

for firewood. After stretching our clothes to dry on the cross-beams, however, we succeeded in regulating the establishment with comparative neatness; so much so, indeed, that we determined, if game abounded in the neighbourhood, to stay here two or three days. Accordingly, when the sky cleared for a few minutes, we proceeded to mend the worm-fence, and in a short time completed a very tolerable enclosure for our horses. L. then took his rifle and went over the hill after a deer, while I, practising upon the lessons in domestic economy learned at the negro's hut in the morning, proceeded to prepare some corn with which, for the use of our horses, we had before filled our saddle-bags. Several hours elapsed before I heard the cheering whoop of my friend ringing through the glen; but he came emptyhanded, having seen game of no description during his tramp. The pressure of hunger, with the prospect of such a slender larder, compelled us forthwith to break up housekeeping. We left our lonely mansion, however, with some regret, for the perfect seclusion it afforded made it the gem of country-houses. It lay there secreted in the forest like a beaver-trap in a cane-brake, defying the wood-demon himself to find it, unless he had set his hoof in.

It was after night-fall that, by following the

water-course, we arrived with much difficulty at a number of enclosed fields, where a thriving orchard, and a large herd of cattle gathering around the first frame barn we had encountered among these wild hills, indicated a degree of comfort to which we had long been strangers.

A stripling of seventeen was engaged in letting down the bars for the cattle to pass as we rode up to the enclosure. He was a well-made young mountaineer, with a fresh complexion and clear determined eye; his open hunting-shirt revealing a chest of the finest proportions, while the long yellow curls that shaded either side of his open countenance fell upon a pair of shoulders whose square breadth would have done no discredit to the figure of the brawny Cretan, when the frame of that noted render of oaks was yet in the gristle. All these observations I had leisure to make when more at home with the primitive family to which I am about to introduce you. But the make and mien of this young fellow called forth an exclamation from my companion the moment we saw him.

"I reckon if we can't accommodate you, stranger, no one else can hereabouts," replied the young man, to our request for shelter for the night; "just

hitch your nags by the door, and I'll tote your plunder into the house presently."

Approaching the dwelling, which was a one-story building in the shape of an L, we saw a fat old woman in cap and spectacles knitting in the doorway, while a tall gawky-looking female of about five-and-twenty was engaged in spinning by her side. The old lady said that the good man was out, but she supposed we might stay for the night; while the daughter ushered us into a large wainscoted apartment, the beams of which were almost covered with bunches of yarn, hanks of coarse thread, and other similar products of domestic industry suspended from them; while a quantity of bed and table-linen, and homespun frocks and long stockings enough to have fitted out half a dozen rustic wardrobes, filled the shelves and hooks in two recesses on one side of the apartment, and faced a couple of bedsteads with neat dimity curtains, which occupied the corresponding recesses on the other side. Add an oaken table or two, half a dozen rush-bottomed chairs, and a couple of long rifles with powder-horn and bullet-pouch, suspended upon a buck's antlers over the large fireplace, and I believe you have the full physiognomy of the great room of the house: which, with the addition of a few strings of dried

peaches over the mantelpiece, a rag-carpet on the floor, and the substitution of a long ducking-gun, or old tower-musket, in place of the Kentucky rifle, would correspond in every feature with the sitting-room of a substantial Long Island farmer. But the owners of these hoards of homespun wealth could never have been mistaken for New-Yorkers. The group displayed around the fire after the head of the household had made his appearance was such as the masters of the Medici's time loved to paint; nor would the slightest alteration of costume be required for them to figure in the pictures of Raphael or Rembrandt. The females already described were indeed decidedly of the Flemish school; but the thin and sinewy figure of the bald-headed old man, with his long silvery beard depending from a countenance which L. admitted was of as perfect a Roman mould as he had ever beheld in his travels, and flowing almost down to the girdle which kept the faded hunting-shirt to his person, was such as the pencils of Italy alone have preserved upon the canvass. Yet, remarkable as was the aspect of this ancient as he first presented himself to us, with half a dozen sons around him, all, like himself, in belted frocks, and sandals of raw bull's hide, it struck neither of us as did the appearance of a boy of twelve, the

youngest of the group. He was clad like the rest, with the exception of an old broad-brimmed drab beaver, turned up on one side and slouched over the left eye, with as jaunty an air as if the knowing fingers of swashing Wildrake had given it the true Cavalier cut. But the features beneath were of another stamp than those of the Woodstock gallant, that worthy ruffler in King Charles's cause; they were perfectly regular and of singular delicacy, with a complexion more transparent than that of any female I ever beheld. In fact, it was impossible to conceive, when you looked at his long tresses of gold floating away from eyes of the softest hazel, that a head of such amazing beauty could belong to other than a woman. The figure of the boy, though delicate, was, from its perfect proportions, which his dress so well developed, fully in keeping with his face. The little fellow, as he stood with arms folded apart from the rest, leaning against the chimney, caught the attention of my companion, as an armful of dry wood thrown upon the fire brought his person into a sudden glare of light.

"What a beautiful boy!" exclaimed L.

"Why, yes, stranger," replied the old man, following our eyes, while the lad instantly left the room, "I may say that that's as perfect a piece of

man's flesh as Nature and God Almighty ever put together; but I mistrust whether Guy will ever come to good."

"Not unless there's some way of getting the devil out of him," added one of the brothers.

"And we'll never see that day," pursued another; "he'll get shot before he's eighteen. He's *drawed* his knife twice on me already; and unless we keep him at home, young as he is, a rope or a rifle will soon be the finishing of him."

"Now don't talk so about Guy," cried the sister; and just then the subject of our conversation entering, ran up and buried his head in her lap, while the young woman, untying a snod of yellow silk which confined the spoiled boy's curls behind, combed out the long ringlets, and held them up for us to admire with all a sister's fondness.

The hour of bed-time soon arrived, and the old man, kneeling before the Bible he was unable to read, the whole family united with him in a prayer, which was not the less fervid and impressive because he had been denied those advantages of education which in the Northern States are far more generally diffused than here.

The unwonted luxury of clean sheets and a separate bed for each kept L. and myself exchanging congratulations from opposite sides of our

apartment long after we had retired; while, weary as we were, we could not help lying awake for some time, comparing our observations upon the primitive circle into which we had fallen. But at last the wooden clock, which through Yankee enterprise had found its way to this remote glen, struck the hour of ten, and the whole household being long since asleep, we suppressed the murmur of our voices, and were soon dreaming with the rest.

LETTER XXXVIII.

Goose Creek Salt-works, Kentucky, April 14.

If you look upon the pocket-map yclept "The Traveller's Guide through the United States," you will see somewhere about the sources of the river Kentucky a place called Manchester, with a broad highway marked as running through it; the same being the identical spot from which I now write to you, and the route thither so broadly indicated upon paper, the identical path along the rocky channels of brooks, and up and down declivities unconscious of a pickaxe, which we have lately been travelling.

The post-town of Manchester (what a contemptible poverty of invention is displayed everywhere throughout the Union in borrowing the names of places fifty times over) consists of about half a dozen indifferently-built houses pitched here and there upon a pretty knoll, which is washed on two sides by a broad and deep stream that winds through a romantic valley, and is lost at last among the precipitous hills by which the village is nearly

surrounded. The place sprung suddenly into existence at the first establishment of the salt-works in its neighbourhood many years since, and has now, I believe, for more than a generation remained in statu quo. The paint—if it were ever there—has long been worn off the houses; and the youngest man in the town belongs as much to a generation that has passed as does the gray and shattered dwelling in which he first drew breath. The regular outlay of small sums for the little necessaries required by some hundred labourers employed in the salt-works keeps life flickering in one or two small stores; and the same quantum of capital is probably the circulating medium of the whole place. The dozing inhabitants are certain of having the use of it, and pretty certain of getting no more; and having no market but that at their doors, and that being sufficient to keep starvation out of the threshold, their enclosures all look like the patrimony of Rip Van Winkle; and young Rip, when his waking father beheld his slouching figure leaning against the tree, was not more like old Rip than are the Goose Creekers like both of them. It is now about ten o'clock, and looking out of the window, in front of which I am writing, I can see a dozen of these industrious burghers dawdling about a bar-room opposite. No

sound of riot or obstreperous mirth comes thence; and were it not for the guttural chuckle that gurgles now and then from the burly person of my landlord, you would hardly know that they were talking. They are just now changing their position, to study the points of that sorry-looking nag, whose gummy lips, green with half-chewed grass, seem sagging to the sand as his hollow neck droops to the full length of his bridle. An hour hence the steed will still stand where he is, but the group around him will have advanced with the shadows some five yards beyond the eaves: you may then see them curiously grouped upon the clump of logs which form a primitive kind of stile to the fence before the door, and the morning mist, which still hangs upon the hills around, having by that time disappeared, they will be in less doubt about the weather.

The appearance of two well-mounted and thoroughly-equipped travellers has caused quite a sensation in the village. The idea of persons travelling from motives of liberal curiosity cannot enter into the brains of the inhabitants: they insist upon setting down my companion and myself as Yankee pedlers; and as the familiarity of the people has already afforded us a good deal of quiet diversion, we are at no pains to dispel the illusion. A villager

asked me yesterday, while looking at my fowling-piece, if I had "no more of them left;" while another inquired what price I "set upon the remaining one:" the first question implying, I suppose, that we had been driving a trade in guns through the country; and the last presuming, as a matter of course, that a Yankee had no use for fire-arms. "Are there any gentlemen, sir, among the Yankees?" asked quite a decent-looking man of me this morning. I *looked* at the fellow—"I hope no offence, sir," he added; "I mean by gentlemen, planters and such-like, that live as gentlemen do here."—"If you ask for information, my friend, I have never lived among the Yankees, but"—"To be sure there are," interrupted an old Irishman sitting by; "and two gentlemen to one to what there is here."—"Well, you see, stranger, I thought they were all pedlers; but how comes you to deny your country, if it isn't after all among the leavings of Nature's work?" I answered that I was from the State of New-York. "And what now do you call that but a part of Yankee-land?" replied this intelligent yeoman. Just then I heard mine host, who wants but an inch or two added to his long jacket to turn it into a doublet, and qualify him for the immediate personation of Jack Falstaff, calling out most lustily,—

"Halloo, horse!" said old Boniface, slapping on the shoulder a broad-backed fellow that stood in the doorway, "where's Yankee and Dutchee? the bacon and greens are smoking on the table, and I must take a glass of cool liquor with them before we sit down. Ah! there's my stout rifle-cracker; come along, Dutchee, my boy," added he, as L. made his appearance; and then to me, "Yankee, my tall fellow, a glass of old peach with us before dinner: smack! how it relishes! down with it all; it won't hurt a hair of your head; I've washed my mouth with it these forty years. And now, boys, in to dinner while the bacon's hot."

Among the subjects for observation in this secluded nook of the world there is a negro idiot, of about sixteen, who exhibits in his person the most singular sport of nature that I ever beheld. He is exceedingly long armed, with broad flat palms and lank fingers, which make his hands look like the claws of some wild animal; while every motion of his limbs and body has precisely that fumbling character which pertains to the actions of a bear. There is a brook hard-by the house, to which the hogs sometimes come out of the woods to wallow, when this strange-looking creature sallies nearly naked from the kitchen-door to meet them. He soothes the half-wild

swine with uncouth sounds nearly resembling their own; and as they retire to sun themselves beneath the rocky bank of the rivulet, you may see him creeping along its ledges on all-fours, pausing the whiles to swing his long arms to and fro, and then, finally, coiling himself to rest among their miry bodies. My landlord, to whom this unfortunate being belongs, tells a story of the boy's mother having been frightened by a pet bear; to which, I need hardly say, all credence is given in the neighbourhood.

To-morrow, after spending several days here, I shall bid adieu to the curiosities of Goose Creek, and part with the companion to whom I have been lately indebted for so many agreeable hours. L., I believe, returns by another route to Lexington, for it is almost impossible to take care of man and horse on the road by which we came. The people are miserably poor among these wild hills, and the small snatches of soil which they cultivate on the banks of the streams are hardly large enough to produce the necessaries of life. The country is, however, exceedingly healthful; and, having no newspapers circulating among them, and but rarely seeing a traveller, they live on in utter ignorance of the world, and sing the praises of

"old Kaintuck" with as much fervour as the yeoman who rides over his thousand fat acres in the finest regions of Kentucky. These primitive people live altogether in log-huts, and you may form some idea of their extreme poverty, from our being utterly unable in our last day's ride to procure grain of any sort for our horses, or even a mouthful of food for ourselves. We pressed forward over the most rugged road, from early in the morning till long after noon, being told at every house that we would find refreshment in the next; but at last, in despair, were compelled to feed our tired beasts upon the corn-cakes with which we had filled our pockets in the morning for our own refreshment. We stretched ourselves upon a mossy bank, where a brook that crept by made an opening in the deep forest, and admitted the sunshine to the myriads of wild flowers that bent over its current. Our two faithful companions, divested of their equipments, were tethered near, and after taking a bite of the long grass which grew around the roots of the trees, would ever and anon thrust their noses towards us, and whinny for more of the grateful food with which we had recently supplied them. Our hard riding had given us full two hours to spare, and the disposition to enjoy them as the spot suggested; the sheltering

foliage above—the murmuring brook hard-by—the grass softer than sleep*—what could be more inviting? But suddenly, the green thatch above seemed to cast a deeper shade, the squirrel ceased his pranks upon the fallen beech-tree near, the red-bird stilled his whistle, the woods were silent as death, and the sickly odour that stole from the flowers was rank as if they grew upon a sepulchre. The day had been excessively warm; but now, without a breath of air stirring, the atmosphere seemed to have become damp and clammy as the air of a dungeon. We heard an ancient tree fall: they sometimes fall, as every woodman knows, when nature is calm around, and their destruction is no prognostic of a coming tempest, but the crash of this one broke upon the still scene like thunder. Its echoes seemed to rend the cloud above us; for straightways, peal on peal, the bolts went rattling by, as if the whole of Heaven's artillery were in the field. But we were mounted and miles on our way before a drop of rain descended. It seemed as if it were held back to let one element do its work alone, for the lightning flashed with such fierce rapidity that the very air seemed burning with it; I could almost fancy that it played around my horse's feet, and pierced the

* "Herba mollior somno."—*Virgil.*

ground beneath them.* And now the rain began to fall in torrents, while the sudden blast that swept it in blinding sheets against us came crashing through the forest like a tornado. Bending low in the saddle to clear the whirring branches, we levelled our guns lest they should attract the lightning, and spurring our terrified horses, dashed through the woods at a rate which soon carried us beyond the danger of the driving boughs; and fording a rapid creek, whose waters were already turbid with the growing freshet, were glad to get safe in our present quarters, just as the night closed in.

L—— tells me, that in hunting yesterday morning on a hillside along our route, he counted five places where the lightning had struck.

LETTER XXXIX.

Cumberland Gap, April 17.

The morning mist was yet hanging over the upland, on the day that I left Manchester, as L. and I, after receiving the hearty farewell of our jovial host Uncle Tommy, crossed the little brook that flowed near our quarters, and proceeded on our separate journeys. Our roads parted at the base of a steep wooded hill or mountain, and long after our last adieux were exchanged, as we wound around its shaggy side in opposite directions, our horses manifested the strong mutual friendship they had contracted, by continuing to echo each other's neighs till the sound of their hoofs had died in the distance, and the interchange of regretful feeling could sooth their ears no more. My sympathy for my bereaved Bucephalus was, however, I will confess, almost swallowed up in concern for myself, as I felt how much I should miss my late accomplished companion among the wild and grand scenes I was about to visit.

I had then a most romantic ride of seventeen

miles along the most unromantically named "Goose Creek;" which, it must be acknowledged, keeps its way as heroically and gracefully among the savage cliffs and soft meadows that by turns scowl upon or dally with its waters, as if it had been happier in its godfathers: but you know, one sometimes finds a Snooks with the soul of a Marion, and sees the ankles of a Vestris supporting a Higginbottom. In the course of this ride I saw several establishments for the manufacture of salt, in rather a flourishing condition; but the cottagers along my bridle-path, for the road was but little more, seemed as poorly off in this world's goods as most of those in this district whom I have had occasion to mention. At last, coming out upon the State road, a very tolerable inn greeted my eyes: there was a white man reading a newspaper on the piazza in front, and a negro groom at the porch to take my horse; and these being the first indigenous reader and hostler I had seen for some time, I could not but congratulate myself upon the promising aspect of things. My expectations were realized in a capital breakfast, which was soon set before me; during which, while chatting with the good woman of the house, as she poured out my coffee, and pressed me now to take another egg, and now to try a

little more of the smoked venison, I learned that the family had been driven from Lexington last summer by cholera, after losing eleven out of their number. The rest of that day's ride, though not a week has yet intervened, is now, from the rapid succession of the various beautiful scenes that opened upon me, too confused in memory for me to attempt particular description. I have before given you the general features of the scenery in this region, and I must leave you to imagine those sharp conical hills, or miniature mountains, I have so often lately spoken of, gradually swelling in magnitude until they insensibly deserve the name of mountains, and so attaching themselves by degrees to the Cumberland chain, that they at last become almost imbodied with it, and claim kindred with the majestic Alleghanies. That there is some distinction still kept up, however, in their ranges, you may gather from the reply of a countryman of whom I asked the road, when somewhat puzzled once among the various defiles—"I reckon you don't go this road very often, stranger? for it is as plain as the first* sight on a rifle! Well, now, you know where Major Douglas's barn is? That's it across the road; you

* The long western rifle has three sight-pieces on the barrel.

just take that on your left hand, and go ahead about two hundred rods. I allow, then, you may take yonder knob on your right shoulder, and carry it till it joins the ridge about two miles from here; you may then keep the ridge in the same place (*videlicet*, on my right shoulder) till it slaps into the mountain yonder." This idea of carrying a knob or hill on one's shoulder till it becomes a mountain no doubt is borrowed from the worthy Cretan, who carried a calf till it became a bull. Milo's task was, however, mere boys' play to mine. You may fancy, as it was growing late, how I whipped up the major's barn in my left hand, and flirted it aside like a feather after going the two hundred rods—conceive me then curling my fingers in the shaggy pines on the top of the hill designated, and wrenching it from its roots as a Lilliputian would a peanut! I swung the growing thing over my right shoulder, till in a portage of two miles it swelled into a mountainous ridge, nor dropped my burthen till it could stand alone a full-grown mountain.

I was now riding along the banks of the Cumberland River, and the moon-beams had already begun to silver the cliffs that bend over its beautiful waters, when I reached the celebrated ford whose romantic banks have been so well described

in one of Judge Hall's Western legends. The stream looked broad and deep, and advancing into its full current, where the moon, touching a slight ripple, indicated, as I thought, a zigzag pathway, my saddle was thoroughly wetted before I heard a warning voice on the opposite side, directing me to head the stream, and push for another point than that which I had immediately in view.

A glance at the foaming rifts over my right shoulder gave me, I confess, every disposition to act upon the advice with all alacrity; and soon gaining shoaler water, I was much provoked to learn from my friendly cautioner, as he approached the bank to receive me, that I might have escaped a partial ducking by availing myself of a ferry within a mile of the place where I had crossed the stream. A Western man never thinks of directing a mounted traveller to such a convenience, unless the stream be otherwise impassable.

I passed the night at a capital inn within a few yards of the water's edge; and the morrow's dawn still carried my route along the picturesque Cumberland. The advance of the season had become rapidly apparent as I proceeded southwardly. The foliage was richer, and of a deeper die; and as the morning light shot athwart the crags above me, and glanced on the glossy mag-

nolias that fringed the river's brink, nothing could be more beautiful than the contrast of shades, which the deep green of the towering hemlocks and the light leaves of the buck-eye and paw-paw afforded. I began soon to ascend a mountain, and there too the deep woods afforded other objects of interest. The squirrels pranked it away among the leafy boughs as pertly near me as if wholly free from fear; the timid rabbit made the last year's leaves rustle, as, affrighted by the sound of my horse's hoofs, he darted beneath his bushy covert,—and the red-bird and gold-winged woodpecker played fearlessly about my path, while the wood-doves alighted like tame pigeons in the road, or fluttered for miles along it. Emerging from this forest—where many a tree would throw a column of ninety feet shaft, above thickets rich with the white blossom of the dog-wood and the deep verdure of the may-apple—a ride of a mile or two through a beautiful undulating amphitheatre brought me to the base of the Cumberland Mountains. Their unbroken chain extended far away on either side, to the north-east and south-west, from "The Gap" in front of me; which is, I believe, the only defile by which they are passed. This notch in the rocky ridge, though its sides are so steep as to appear as if

worn away by the action of water, is still so elevated above the adjacent country as to afford a prospect of the grandest description. Whichever way the eye turns, its view is terminated by wooded summits: but the Cumberland chain itself is so narrow that you can almost see the base on either side, while the intermediate distances between it and the detached heights around are filled with meadows, and orchards, and bright streams, and craggy promontories, blended together in the most picturesque confusion.

It was my last look at beautiful Kentucky, and I lingered on the magnificent landscape, as the breeze of day became hushed upon the hill-side, till the growing twilight shut it from my view. It was my last look at beautiful Kentucky,—and I could not but recall, while slowly turning my horse's head from the setting sun, the emotions which the patriarch Boone has recorded, when that bold adventurer first pushed beyond the mountains, and at the same golden hour, and perhaps from the very height where I was then standing, looked down upon the wilderness of tufted blossoms before him.*

* "After a long and fatiguing journey through a mountainous wilderness, in a westward direction, I at last, from the top of an eminence, saw with pleasure the beautiful land of Kentucky. * *

The whippoorwill was already beginning to call from the hill-side, when I reached the little inn from which I write, at the foot of the mountain; and the smooth cascade that glides over a tall cliff in the rear of the house shone amid the dusky cedars like a pillar of light beneath the uprising moon.

Such a spot is not to be met with every day of one's life, and I determined, as soon as I found I could be accommodated in the inn, to spend some time in looking around me. I have been amply repaid by passing a day in exploring the finest cavern I have ever beheld. But as it is worthy of a letter by itself, I will endeavour to describe it in my next.

It was in June; and at the close of day the gentle gales retired, and left the place to the disposal of a profound calm. Not a breeze shook the most tremulous leaf. I had gained the summit of a commanding ridge, and looking round with astonishing delight, beheld the ample plains, the beauteous tracts below. * * * Nature was here a series of wonders, and a fund of delight. Here she displayed her ingenuity and industry in a variety of flowers and fruits, beautifully coloured, elegantly shaped, and charmingly flavoured; and I was diverted with innumerable animals presenting themselves continually before my view. * * * The buffaloes were more frequent than I have seen cattle in the settlements, browsing on the leaves of the cane, or cropping the herbage on these extensive plains, fearless because ignorant of man."—[Narrative of Colonel Daniel Boone, from his first arrival in Kentucky in 1769, to the year 1782.]

LETTER XL.

Cumberland Gap, April 8.

There are three or four houses within as many hundred yards of the little inn at which I am staying; but this appears to be the only tenanted one in the neighbourhood. It lies upon the edge of a grove of pines, facing the road, with a green meadow on one side, and the crags of the Cumberland range impending immediately over it on the other. The dividing lines of Kentucky, Tennessee, and Virginia here intersect each other; and the triangular section thus made on the confines of these three "sovereign and independent States," is reputed to be a sort of neutral ground, so far as the operation of the laws of either is concerned. A gang of counterfeiters and coiners of false money are said to have their workshops among the deep glens adjacent. I am told that they mingle with the people in the most impudent manner.* Their fast horses carry them when suspected soon beyond the reach of immediate pursuit; and the seclusion

* Whimsically enough, the individual who gave the writer this information subsequently palmed a copper dollar upon him.

of their rocky dens prevents their being subsequently ferreted out,—supposing even that the sheriff's officers should be anxious to encounter these "Cumberland riders." You may form some idea of the facilities for retirement afforded here to these gentry, by accompanying me now through the cavern mentioned in my last. There is a mountain-torrent within pistol-shot of the house, and by following it up about a quarter of a mile, you come to where it rushes from a small opening in the hill-side. Passing about a hundred yards ahead, the gorge, which farther down affords a channel to the brook, is abruptly terminated by a precipitous rock; and here, in the face of this rock, overhung by drooping weeds and wild flowers, is the entrance to the cave. It is a ragged aperture, about six feet in diameter, sloping downward from the brink internally about fifteen feet; and when the sun is in certain positions, you may from the outside catch a glimpse of the brook before spoken of, as it gleams over the floor of the cavern, while keeping its way to the outlet lower down the mountain. I had four guides with me, each of whom carried torches; and after lighting them at the entrance, and supplying myself with a long pole to steady my descent down the first steep, we entered the mouth of the cave. A few steps in

the shallow water at the bottom led to a sudden turn, where the daylight was at once excluded; and uniting our torches together, to throw their collected light in advance, we discovered that we could only continue our route by entering a deep pool about breast-high, which lay clear as crystal before us. In the middle of this pool a detached crag hung from above, so near to the water's edge as to screen the path beyond; and before entering the water I sent one of the party ahead to ascertain whether there was any dry footing beyond. He shrunk at first from the icy water; but after pausing a moment, when it threatened to reach his shoulders, soon disappeared behind the curtain; and listening to his splashes a moment or two longer, we were glad at last to hear his call to "come on." Our path in advance did not seem to improve much, however, as we gained the point proposed; for after advancing a few paces over a floor of rock and sand, another pool, still broader, and almost of equal depth, lay yet before us,—*c'est ne que le premier pas*, &c.,—and so we went ahead, while our route through this damp and narrow gallery soon terminated in a lofty and dry chamber some fifteen feet in diameter. This was called "The Fire-room," and here we proceeded to kindle some fuel brought with us, and prepare

for our farther advance into these dark domains. On the upper side of this chamber, whose floor was a rough inclined plane of about forty-five degrees, there was a narrow hole called "The Blast," barely large enough for the admission of a man's body. Through this aperture the wind rushed with such force as actually to bewilder one, and of course extinguish a torch instantly when placed in contact with it. The passage it afforded ran in an upward direction, and was about five yards in length. Having supplied himself with a brand from the fire, our principal guide led the way through the crevice, and we successively followed, crawling after him on our hands and knees. This, I confess, was a pretty disagreeable piece of business; but when the torches were again lit, and I could look around me, I felt myself amply repaid. The apartment, which from its smooth, dome-like roof is called "The Oven," would cover an area, I should think, judging by the imperfect light, of at least forty feet diameter; though the immense rocks which lie in massive piles upon its floor renders it difficult to judge of its dimensions. These rocks formed a rough knoll in the centre, and clambering with some difficulty to the top, we pursued our way along a rocky ridge, whose profile might have been borrowed from the external features of

any of the mountains around. We seemed, indeed, from the numerous rises and descents along our route, to be traversing the broken summit of a mountain, with merely the roof of a cave instead of the canopy of heaven above us. At length, however, we descended into a long narrow apartment, called "The Saloon." It had a high square ceiling and a firm floor of clay,—firm enough, indeed, for the foot of a dancer. This, I learned from my guides, was the favourite room of the place; but though certainly a most comfortable-looking chamber for a picknick, I did not think it compared with the apartment into which I was soon after ushered. "The Gallery of Pillars" realized all that I had ever read of those sparry halls, that lift their glistening columns and sport their fairy tracery within the bowels of the earth. The form of the grotto was so irregular that it was nearly impossible to make an estimate of its dimensions. The innumerable stalactites, sometimes pendent from the roof, and sometimes raising themselves in single columns from the floor, were so clustered together and intermingled, that the actual walls of the subterranean chamber were excluded from view; while the light of our torches, as we waved them aloft, would at one moment be reflected back from a thousand fretted points, and be

lost the next in some upward crevice, that led away, the bats alone knew where. But the most striking object in this fairy cell is yet to be mentioned. It was a formation of spar resembling a frozen waterfall, that reared itself to the height of fifteen or twenty feet, and ran completely across one end of the chamber. The ceiling of the grotto was about ten feet higher, but the petrifying water, which was now dripping from the hanging stalactites above, had united them here and there with the top of this marble cascade, so as to form a Gothic screen of sparry points and pillars along its otherwise smooth round summit. One of the guides succeeded with the aid of his companions in scaling the slippery elevation, and drawing his body with difficulty between the dropping pillars that knit the top of the congealed cascade to the roof of the grotto, he disappeared in perfect darkness behind the screen. A moment after it seemed as if a hundred lamps were dancing in that part of the cavern. He had merely lighted a couple of candles with which he was supplied, and placed them so as to be reflected from the minute and interlacing fretwork above.

There was yet another chamber to be explored; and being now about half a mile from the mouth of the cave, it behooved us, if we wished to derive

any benefit from our lights in returning, to expedite our movements. Passing, then, from the grotto, the uneven floor of which was partly paved with truncated columns of spar, and partly strewn with broken pillars that some barbarous hands had wrenched from their places, we crawled over huge rocks, where the roof of the cavern descended to within three or four feet of the broken floor, and came to a rugged declivity, seamed by deep and dark chasms, which rendered the descent difficult and perilous. When we had gained the bottom of this precipice and looked up, the top of the cavern was scarcely discernible by the light of our torches. A limpid brook, about a foot in depth, had here channelled its way in the smooth limestone; following it up for a few yards, a sudden turn brought us to a long semicircular gallery, about five feet in height, and hardly more in breadth. This, from the singular echoes it produced, was called "The Music-room;" and no whispering gallery could supply a more remarkable phenomenon of sound. The lowest tone of voice produced a murmur that trembled through the apartment, like the humming sound created by striking upon the wood-work of a guitar, —or rather, I may assimilate the effect produced by some tones, the base ones particularly, to the

low notes which a harp will send forth when the keys of a piano are touched near it. I was very sorry that we had not a musical instrument of some kind with us, to experiment more particularly upon these delicate and not unmelodious echoes. This room was nearly in the form of a crescent, and its smooth ceiling sloped gradually at the farther end till it touched the surface of the winding rivulet. At that point the stream became both broader and deeper; and the cavern not having been yet explored beyond this chamber, I proposed diving into the brook where it disappeared beneath the descending roof, and ascertaining whether it were not possible to rise in an open space beyond. The principal guide, however, declared that he had already tried the experiment, and had nearly been suffocated by getting his head above water in a crevice of the dropping vault, from which it was difficult to extricate himself. We prepared, therefore, to retrace our steps; and our lights being nearly exhausted, we reduced their number to two while winding again through the devious labyrinth. After once or twice slightly missing the way, I emerged at last from this nether world, highly gratified with my subterranean wanderings.

LETTER XLI.

Tazewell, Tennessee, April 21.

I write to you from a small county town in Tennessee. It is composed of about a hundred wooden houses, scattered along a broad street, which traverses the side of a high hill or mountain-slope, and which, though partly shut in by wooded elevations, still commands a wide view of cultivated country. This is the first day of court-week, and the village, which presents rather a desolate appearance, from the want of shrubbery, or ornamental enclosures of any kind, around the houses, is somewhat enlivened by the troops of country people moving to and fro. There is a group of the white beaver and hunting-shirt gentry collected at this moment around a blood-horse, whose points a groom is showing off opposite to my window; and farther up the street, round the steps of the little unpainted wooden Court-house, is a collection of old women, in scarlet cloaks or plaid wrappers, gossipping together.

I entered Tazewell about sunset, a day or two since. My horse had fallen lame within ten miles of the place; and taking the bridle in my hand, I trudged leisurely along, till I gained the inn, where I have established myself. The afternoon was perfectly still, and a herd of cows, which a mounted negro was urging homeward, were the only objects stirring in the town. I could discern, however, that it was inhabited, from seeing the village tailor and other dignitaries of the place lounging upon rush-bottomed chairs in front of their dwellings, while the lazy vapour that curled from their pipes, in the evening air, bespoke a sort of indolent repose, such as whilom reigned in the drowsy region of Sleepy Hollow. I looked from my window in the morning, and there, at ten o'clock, sat the same set of luxurious worthies, a low chuckle or a short laugh, as some acknowledged wag doled out his good things, being the only sound of animation that met my ears. I looked when the heat of the noonday sun had made their position no longer tenable, and the industrious Tazewellites had retired within-doors to their various avocations. Evening, with its shadows, brought them again, also; and, maugre the example of my attentive and stirring little landlord, I found that I had imbibed a portion of the indolence pre-

vailing around me. I sauntered across the way, and lit my cigar by the most accessible looking of the company; and dropping into an unoccupied chair, balanced it on two legs, with an air that at once made good my claim to a share in their gossip. I had just got comfortably embarked with one of the seniors in a quiet dish of local politics, when an outcry, a few yards off, attracted our attention. Stepping up to the group of persons from which it arose, I saw a queer-looking little bantam figure, in an old straw hat and coarse shrunk-up hunting-shirt, who appeared to be in the highest paroxysm of rage. At one moment, he would vent his fury in a torrent of outrageous epithets, and then, griping the shrunken skirt of his little hunting-shirt with one hand, while the other was shaken angrily at the crowd, he would leap a yard in the air, turning round on his heel as he came down, and crowing like a game cock. In performing this evolution, I caught a sight of his face by the moonlight, and discovered that he had undergone a very common piece of western waggery, having had his face blacked, when overtaken by liquor.

"Who has dared to make a nigger of me?" shouted the unfortunate votary of Bacchus, as I approached him, dilating his little pony-built per-

son with great pomposity: "who dared treat little John like a brute? Let me but get at him, and I'll drink his blood. I'll eat his liver" (gnashing his teeth); "if God has breathed the breath of man into him, let him speak, and I'll knock it out. Little John is not the man to be walked over; little John never insulted anybody, but he knows how to mount them that don't treat him like a gentleman,—wheugh, whoop, whoop,—whe-ug-h,—I'm a real screamer!" And here he bounced up, crowing in the air, as if he had springs in his heels.

"I'm the man, John," cried one of the crowd, throwing off his coat.—"You, you, indeed!" answered the little champion, without stirring from the spot; "why, Bill, you know you lie! You wouldn't dare to play such a trick on me; but only let me catch the real fellow."—"It's a shame, a shame, to treat John so," cried half a dozen voices around.—"No, no, it's no shame; it's only a shame that the black villain should hide himself after he did it; thank God, John can take care of himself" (here he flapped his arms, and crowed defiance). "I'm as good a bit of man's flesh as skin ever covered" (here he crowed again). "I'm the first-born of my mother, and knock under to no white man. 'John,' says she, 'you are a true one,'—and so I am; I'm a

pony, to be sure, but I'm the prettiest little creature that ever * * * * had a hand in damning or redeeming."

Shocked at the singular profanity of these last words, I withdrew quickly from his side, where I had taken my position to study so capital a specimen of the Colonel Wildfire; but the movement, however rapid, caught the eye of the excited speaker.

"Stranger," he cried, stretching out his hand to me, "I hope I have said nothing to hurt your feelings; I never insult any man; little John's words may be wild, but there's nothing wicked at his heart; my mother knows I am as good a little fellow as ever mother brought forth; but then, she said I was a screamer, the moment she saw me; 'John,' says she, 'you're a real out-and-outer;' and am I not?" (crowing:)—"who says little John was ever afraid of man or beast? Come out here, any ten of you, and I'll mount you one after another."

The rapidity with which these whimsical expressions of wrath, and thrice as many more, were poured upon each other, was perfectly astonishing; and the mad antics the valorous little fellow cut the whiles were irresistibly ludicrous. At length his rage appeared nearly to have spent it-

self, and he listened with some composure to the wicked wags who, collecting around him, pretended to sympathize in his wrongs. One of them even undertook to wash his face for him; but smearing it over with oil as his patient bent over the basin, the inky die became so fixed in the pores that the office of eradicating it must have been no sinecure. It was then proposed to bring him a looking-glass; which I presume was done, for, pausing a moment on the steps, ere I entered my lodgings, in expectation of another explosion, I heard the merrimakers shouting with peals of laughter, while poor little John seemed to have retired, completely done up.

I could not help reflecting, while retiring for the night, that the subject of all this village uproar,—who, in language and manners, was an exact impersonation of the western character, as it is generally portrayed,—was any thing but a fair specimen of the western population; for, though you meet with some such extravagant character in almost every hamlet, you might as well form your idea of the New-England yeomanry from the Yankee pedlers that prowl through the Western States, as to conceive that the mass of the population over the mountains are of this "half-horse and half-alligator" species. I had a long conversation this morning

with a middle-aged country lawyer, upon western life and character, in which I gave my sentiments with great freedom; and though, like our countrymen in every part of the Union, he was sufficiently exacting of the praise of strangers, he did not seem to take offence at some of my observations, which were not altogether palatable.

"Well, sir," he began, after bidding me good morning, "what do you think of *our country?*"

"It is a rich and beautiful one, sir."

"There's no two ways about that, sir; but aren't you surprised to see such a fine population?"

"You have certainly a fine-looking set of men, with good manners, and a great deal of natural intelligence."

"But their knowledge of things, sir, and the way in which they live,—don't you think our plain country people live in a very superior way, sir?"

"Have you ever been in the Northern or Eastern States, sir?—New-York or New-England?" I replied. While answering negatively, he gave a look of utter amazement at the idea of comparing those districts with that in which he lived. I then, —while doing justice to the many attractive points in the character of these mountaineers, their hardihood and frank courtesy to strangers, their easy

address, and that terseness of expression and command of language which often strikes and interests you in the conversation of men who actually cannot read,—explained to him the superiority which greater industry and acquired knowledge of useful facts gives the northern man, of the same class, in providing comforts and conveniences for himself and family, and living in a style that approaches that of the independent planter of the west. But, countryman as he was, I could not persuade one who had probably, in western phrase, been "raised on hog and hominy," and kept all his life on "bacon and greens," of the advantages of a thoroughly-cultivated garden, a well-kept dairy, and flourishing poultry-yard; much less could I make him understand the charm which lay in neat enclosures, and a sheltered porch or piazza, with shrubbery clustering around it. He only replied, when I commented upon the fields, which I sometimes saw, that had run out from indolence or bad tillage, that "there was land enough to make new ones;" and added, as we placed ourselves at the breakfast-table, "that if the people did not live up to other people's ideas, they lived as well as they wanted to. They didn't want to make slaves of themselves; they were contented with living as their fathers lived before them."

I remembered, while passing him an old-fashioned salt-cellar over our frugal table, that he had Horace* on his side, and could not but acknowledge that contentment was the all in all.

* "Vivitur parvo bene cui paternum,
Splendet in mensa tenui salinum," &c.

LETTER XLII.

Tazewell, Tennessee, April 22.

I have explored another limestone cavern since I last wrote to you; and, though by no means so grand an object of curiosity as that at Cumberland Gap, I have found it well worth visiting. It is about two miles from Tazewell, and the entrance is on the side of a lofty wooded hill, of a shape nearly conical. There are two mouths, and the one by which I entered is larger than that of the cave described in my last; but the passage, a few yards from the entrance, is so narrow as to admit but one person abreast. It descends, for a while, in a sort of screwing path, deep into the mountain; you then come to a small chamber, with a floor of earth and loose stones, from which three narrow paths diverge; the chief of these, after several turns, brings you to a high-vaulted apartment, with several apertures in its walls, leading off to winding galleries, which frequently intersect each other. In this apartment, there is a fine

spring, which discharges itself over a precipice, within the cave. I did not fathom the depth: but the light of a candle, held over the brink, did not reach the bottom; and I estimated, from the sound the water made in falling, that it could not be less than fifty feet. The passages diverging from this part of the cavern seemed to be innumerable, and intersected each other so often, both vertically and horizontally, that the whole mountain appeared to be honey-combed: but I could discover no other chamber worthy of notice, except that in which the spring had birth. After traversing half the labyrinth, sometimes descending a declivity of a dozen yards, and at others climbing an ascent of as many more, groping along the edges of precipices, and squeezing my body through holes that would interpose a remora to the advance of the most moderate alderman, I was, at length, compelled to evacuate the premises as rapidly as possible. There being but few large chambers in the cave, the smoke of a fire, made near the spring, in case of any accident to our lights, had pervaded the whole place, and become almost stifling. Southey, who says that nitrous oxide is the atmosphere they breathe in heaven, did not, when under the hands of the chymist, draw in the exhilarating fluid with half the gusto

that I gulped down the fresh air, when I got my head once more above the earth.

To give you an idea of the indolent want of curiosity in these parts, I might mention that I found but few persons in Tazewell who could tell me any thing about this singular cavern, and was ultimately indebted for my guidance thither to some lads of the village, who had only partially explored it. But the case of the Tazewellians does not compare with that of those worthy people who are said to have passed their lives within hearing of the thunders of Niagara, without having once sought to see the stupendous phenomenon.

The innumerable caverns and mountain-fastnesses of every description in this region would make it a strong refuge in time of hostile invasion, and enable the inhabitants to hold their wild hills against the armies of the world. It has often occurred to me as very remarkable, that the aborigines, throughout this broad mountain-chain, did not make a longer and more successful stand against the encroachments of the white population. One would suppose, that they would only have been ejected from the mountain region of western Virginia, and eastern Kentucky and Tennessee, by some sudden and combined movement; but here, as in more champaign districts, they appear to

have retired gradually, step by step, before the advances of civilization. Had there been some broad direct route through the mountains, either by a navigable stream or a straight open valley, connecting the settled countries on the Atlantic with the tempting lands of western Kentucky, and the immense grazing and arable region beyond, the whites, if allowed an unmolested passage, would probably have passed immediately to the fertile regions in advance, and left the hilly country to be inhabited, to this day, by the aborigines. The indigenous mountaineers would probably then, like other barbarians, when surrounded by a belt of civilization, have been gradually, as game diminished, changed into a nation of herdsmen; such, indeed, as the Cherokees, with other tribes farther south, on this mountain-chain, have partially become. Unhappily, however, for the preservation of the Indian race, the settlements, when originally made, extended so widely along the Atlantic coast, that emigration has always advanced upon them in one broad opposing front,—a single wave, that, running longitudinally through the continent, has carried every thing before it, as it swept to the westward; while want of knowledge of the richer prizes to be acquired by penetrating at once to the far west, or possibly the previous existence of the

long hostile French establishments in that quarter, has induced the pioneer to pause in his career, and to battle for, and to conquer, every acre that he passed over. A cause similar to the last, viz. the neighbourhood of the Spaniards, when Louisiana was in their possession, may have helped to preserve their wild hills to the Cherokees; and made them, until the recent discovery of large quantities of gold in their country, the only exception to the general rule.

There are still persons living in this neighbourhood who remember the fierce war of extermination among the tribes around. I have even met one aged man who says that he has hunted the buffalo east of the mountains; and he pointed out as we rode along together,—for, though nearly eighty, he was still on horseback,—more than one pass or stream where bloody scenes of frontier strife had occurred. The Indians here, though, as elsewhere, must have been very destructive of each other long before the whites appeared. A farmer, I am told, can scarcely plough up a new clearing without finding a bushel of arrow-heads. An incident occurred to me on the borders of Kentucky, some 150 miles from here, which will give you some idea of the quantity of these memorials of savage conflict in certain dis-

tricts. Seeing a child playing on the hearth with an ancient stone-hatchet, at the house of a farmer, where I passed the night, I immediately offered him a substitute for his curious toy. The tomahawk, which was an unusually large one, was partly broken. "Jef," said the father, as his son placed it in my hands, "what do you give the stranger such a thing as that for? if he cares about such truck, go along and bring him a better one; there are a dozen lying about the house. Don't, man-nee, don't put such a stone as that in your saddle-bags," added he to me, at the same time picking up the hatchet, and tossing it out of the window. The boy appeared the moment after with several in his hands, and I selected a tomahawk of polished green stone, which, though small, is the most perfect specimen I have ever seen. I inquired whether any other Indian remains were found in the neighbourhood. The farmer, who was quite an aged man, replied that there were several of those ancient forts which I have more than once described to you, on the rocky knobs around. "But, man-nee," said he, with a shake of his head, "they were never made by the red devils that we found in the country; I can show you one with trees three feet through on it; it would take half of old Kentuck to pile up the

stuff the way it lies there, in a sheer wall along the edge of the knob. No, no, Indians never did that." I asked him then who did it. "Why, who," he replied, "but the people whose bones we take out from under oaks that have been a thousand years growing; fellows with thigh-bones as long as my leg." My friend Professor L——, who was with me at the time, smiled at this assertion, and asked the ancient whether any medical man had ever examined these bones. "Examine them!" answered the other with a stare, "and what could the doctors expect to find among a heap of old bones. I mistrust you would say they belonged to brutes, when I have seen many a scull as big as two of yours, and have fitted a jaw-bone over my own, when I could put both hands between it and my cheeks." And the old man, suiting the action to the word, held out his chin with both hands, with an air of positiveness that put an end to all argument. To assert the existence of these gigantic human remains is very common in the West, but I have not yet been able to obtain a sight of any; though the old settler in question averred, like many others I have met with, that his plough in former years turned up innumerable skeletons of huge proportions. Philosophy, I know, laughs at these traditions, but I make it a point to place im-

plicit faith in them; they are among the most characteristic productions of the country, and should be cherished as such by every genuine lover of the marvellous, and who would fain nurse up a little credulity in these days of general skepticism. Besides, these bones after all are only represented as of a "reasonable bigness:" the mortals of whom they were the frame-work were not of that generation that a grave historian* tells us ate up a bullock at a meal, and picked their teeth with the horns; but middle-sized fellows, some eight or ten feet high only, who bore about the same proportion to the mammoth that a grenadier does to an elephant. I intend to take some opportunity of digging for one of these worthies, and should I disinter him whole, the tall gentleman shall bestride my pony, and share my saddle with me till we reach home. Happily, in thus turning resurrectionist, one incurs no danger from the surviving relatives of a suit "de *bonis* asportatis."

* Deidrick Knickerbocker.

LETTER XLIII.

Jonesville, Lee County, Virginia, April 25.

I have entered western Virginia, and my horse's head is now turned homewards; but the lofty Alleghanies are yet between us, and I have still many a mountain-ridge to pass before gaining the neutral ground where the streams first begin to run eastward. Nor must you wonder if I journey but slowly among these wild hills; for while the roads are not the most favourable to expeditious travelling, there is every inducement for one who has an eye for the beauties of nature to linger by the way-side. No district of the broad West that I have yet visited is more to my taste than the bold and magnificent scenery of this mountain region. The shadowy glens and frowning heights remind me, when compared with the smooth and interminable prairies of the far west, of a troubled sky with its masses of moving clouds, whose varying volume and shifting light each moment reward the eye with some new image of grandeur and of power, —of such a sky as this contrasted with the arched

vault when there is not a speck to dim its bright surface; where not an object breaks the untroubled depths of blue, but the thick-sown stars that pave their wide expanse. There is glory enough in both; but the feeling inspired by the one while watching the gathering war or actual conflict of the elements, is a stern joy, a hurrying excitement; the emotions awakened by the other are the earnest contemplation of beauty swallowed up in majesty; the abiding sense of order that bespeaks omnipotence. And yet so fond of variety is the mind, that the changing shadows of clouds and mountains would long amuse the eye, after a cloudless heaven or a boundless prairie had lost its power to please,—for habit will make even the sublime appear monotonous.

I was musing to this effect on the day that I left Tazewell, while, descending a mountain-pass at sunset, I paused occasionally to catch the beautiful changes of light and shade, as now, sinking behind the height I was leaving, the sun's warm rays still played among the billowy masses of foliage that swelled along a towering ridge immediately in advance,—when my eye was caught by a dejected-looking female figure, half-sitting, half-reclining, at the foot of a cliff near a sudden turning of the road. I came so suddenly upon her

wild resting-place, that it was not until she had started in alarm from the shadowy nook, as my horse sheered at beholding such an object in his path, that I perceived it was a woman; and then glancing at her stained and crumpled bonnet and travel-soiled homespun dress, with the coarse and much-worn shoes that she had upon her feet, I perceived she was a young woman of about twenty, and evidently belonging to the humbler walks of life. Her features, I thought, might be pretty, naturally, but they wore a look of lassitude that was absolutely painful. She did not speak as I passed; but turning round after I had gained a few yards beyond, I was met by a sound so imploring that I thought it could only belong to one that was dumb.

"Have I far to go, stranger?" she at length asked, as turning on my tracks I again approached her.

"I cannot answer that, my good girl, till I know whither you are bound."

"And where but to my mother, over the mountains; is she not dying? and I—I shall never have the strength to reach her. Oh, sir," she added, while her eyes swam with tears, "I have not tasted a morsel of food since some kind persons on the road let me eat with them yesterday; and now I

am grown so feeble, I know I shall not get there in time." At these words her eyes closed, while she leaned her person against the rock as if about to sink into a fainting-fit.

Having never yet had the good luck to bear a swooning belle out of a ball-room or theatre, I was wholly at a loss what to do in this emergency, till remembering a flask of whiskey with which I had chanced to provide myself that very morning, as a wash for the chafed back of my horse, I did not hesitate to lean over and apply the restoring liquid to the lips of the sinking damsel. The appearance of kindness and sympathy seemed to aid as much as the draught itself in restoring her. But Venus's cestus itself could not more magically bring smiles and roses into faded cheeks, than did a cold corn-cake and piece of smoked venison, which, when produced from my pocket, were summarily disposed of by my heroine. Pouring out her thanks while demolishing the acceptable cheer, she told me, in the fulness of her heart and mouth, that she lived among the hills in North Carolina; and having heard that her mother, who dwelt in Tennessee, was at the point of death, she had left home, with a few shillings tied in her shawl, to see her parent once more. The toils of her journey had been more than once

relieved by a passing emigrant; but she had been now several days travelling on foot, and her last application for aid having been met with insult, she had, though nearly overcome by fatigue, determined to push on to the last without courting the chance of similar cruelty. I took my map from my pocket, and guessing as nearly as possible, by the route marked thereon, the distance the poor girl had yet to travel, I supplied her with sufficient to defray the trifling expenses she must incur. The slender state of my purse would not permit me to allow for any accidental contingency, and I thought it well, when observing the simplicity with which she confided in a stranger, to add a word or two, enjoining her, if she required further assistance, not to apply to any passing cavalier she might encounter, but to seek it from the hospitable country people around. She raised her eyes inquiringly, while with a look of gratitude she placed her hand in mine, as I guarded her against travellers of my own condition in life; and somehow,—whether from my saddle slightly turning, or from my leaning over too far while making my words as impressive as possible, I really don't know,—but my mouth, before I knew it, came in contact with as sweet a pair of lips ————

Spirit of Uncle Toby! did not the zeal with

which I dashed the spurs into my horse at that moment blot out the involuntary and almost unconsciously committed offence? The sober reflections induced by entering a tall dark wood, when I had gained the base of the mountain, suggested several curious doubts whether some six or seven years' seniority were really sufficient qualifications for lecturing a pretty girl on discretion in a forest at twilight.

"Come in, stranger, come in; old Tom will call the landlord, old Tom will tote your baggage; so come in and take a cup of cider with old Tom," called out to me a tall lean figure, with long gray locks curling under a broad-brimmed beaver, as I rode up about noon the next day to the only tavern in this place; "why, why the devil don't you come in, and leave your nag to the nigger?" added he, as, waiting for the landlord to appear, I occupied myself in unstrapping my valise, and loosening the various fixtures of my cumbersome but comfortable Spanish saddle. I thanked the old gentleman for his civility; but having long since learned that the best way to secure care and attention for your horse in travelling, is to appear to have some consideration for him yourself, I declined leaving my beast till some one should

appear to whom I could give immediate directions for his grooming and disposal for the night.

"Well, now, that makes old Tom think one ain't used to niggers, to see a gentleman look after his own horse," exclaimed the cider-drinker impatiently; "he's a slick bit of a nag too," added he, advancing from the porch, and eying my favoured poney more narrowly. "But come, though you do set so much store by him, I don't believe he will have any objections to your taking some cider with old Tom." The landlord, a young and rather intelligent fellow, now coming up, I forgot entirely, while talking with him a few minutes, the impatient character that had pounced upon me with so much earnestness, and passed him unnoticed as I entered the house and paid my respects to a pretty young woman, who proved to be my landlady. But I was not to escape so easily: "Stranger," whispered the old gentleman, who, I may mention, was dressed like a respectable farmer of the country, or small planter of the second class,—"stranger," muttered he, seizing me by the elbow, "I want to speak to you outside the door.—Now, sir," said he, when we had gained the outside of the threshold, "I want to know if I have insulted you—if you take it hard that old Tom, who, every one knows, has the

biggest heart in the county, has spoken so to you as he did?" I assured him I had taken no offence. "Then why the devil don't you take some cider with me? Didn't I come out the moment you appeared? didn't I call the landlord for you? didn't I offer to have your horse taken? didn't I," shouted he, apparently working himself into a passion, and stamping the whiles, "didn't I treat you like a gentleman? Tell me, sir—tell me, sir; don't you know that old Tom has houses, and fields, and niggers of his own, and is well enough off in the world to take a cup of cider with any of y'r quality?"

I generally make it a point to humour these privileged characters, whenever I meet with them. In the present instance, however, fatigue, caprice, or, if you will, a reasonable impatience at the old gentleman's pertinacity, caused me, as I jerked my arm from his grasp, roughly to repel his importunity. But the mortification instantly betrayed by his fallen features caused me to regret the reply before it had wholly escaped from my lips. The old man stepped back a pace or two, and asked my pardon for the liberty he had taken, expressing himself the while in very good terms. I could, of course, only accord my full forgiveness. "You forgive me, eh?" cried he,

seizing my hand; "then, by G—, stranger," with a slap on my shoulder, "come take a cup of cider with me!"

A swelling of my horse's withers, caused by the pressure of the saddle in descending the steep declivities of the mountain roads, compels me to remain two or three days in this little town. One of the most important characters of the place is a flourishing shopkeeper, or country merchant, who, a few years before, had entered the village as a travelling Yankee pedler. He took no little pleasure in telling me the story of his own preferment. After managing, by various shifts, to make his way thither from his far New-England home, he had put up at the tavern where I was now staying, with a small amount of goods, which he proposed "trading" to the good people around. The resident merchants in the county, however, had caught scent of the itinerant vender, and being now in the county town, no time was lost in seizing and punishing him under the Virginia statute against hawkers and pedlers. The strong prejudice existing against the Yankees in the south-west (and all of us north of Mason and Dixon's line are indiscriminately so called) rendered this the most summary and easy of legal procedures; and the poor pedler was, by the fine

imposed, with attendant expenses, stripped of every thing. "But my mother always told me," pursued he, in telling the story, "that wherever I lost any thing, there was the place to find it; and so I vowed never to leave this place till I could go as well off as I came." The result was, that he remained until his industry, intelligence, and good conduct had gradually won for him both means and character; and he now, I was informed, is one of the wealthiest and most respected persons in the place.

Some, however, speak of this elevation of a Yankee among Virginians as a most portentous occurrence. In speaking of the sectional prejudices existing in some of the districts through which I have passed, I ought to add that they seem to be rapidly wearing away; and though you yet find them very strong when departing at all from the travelled routes, yet they are chiefly confined to the vulgar and illiterate. We of the north indulge so little in sectional feeling, that it is difficult to conceive the extent to which it was once carried; and indeed it still survives in a common expression of the country, "Is he a Yankee or a white man?" I remember once in Illinois seeing a New-York emigrant, of a good old Dutch provincial family from some sleepy nook on the Hudson, kindle with

indignation as he recounted, that while descending the Ohio fifteen years since, he had been more than once refused a drink of water because he was a Yankee. "You know, squire," he added, "I was no Yankee; but when I heard Americans reproaching me with a name in which they might themselves glory—for the Union owes half its value to the New-Englanders—why, I let folks know that I was proud of being called a Yankee." —"And what do you call yourself now?" I rejoined. —"Why now, squire, the Yankees are becoming great people here north of us, in Michigan and so on, and they call us old Illinoians 'Suckers.' We might have a better nickname, to be sure; but since it's stuck, why I hold myself identified with the Suckers. But some of our chaps, who haven't got used to it yet, will be likely to level a rifle at you if you apply the term at random."

This whimsical application of *soubriquets* is, as you are aware, religiously kept up in the State through which I am travelling; the Tuckahoes and Coheese of Virginia, on either side of the Blue Ridge, respectively complimenting each other with as much amiability as do John Bull and Monsieur Jean Crapeau.

LETTER XLIV.

Chilhowee Springs, Washington County,
Virginia, May 7.

I have passed through so many romantic mountain-paths and picturesque vales, watered by streams limpid as air, in reaching this point, that, bewildered by the various beauties of each different landscape that has charmed me, I will only attempt to give you a general impression of all. There are between this place and that from which my last letter was dated, six lofty mountain-ridges running parallel to each other, each of which supplies a grand and extensive prospect. In the intermediate valleys three beautiful rivers, —Powells, Clinch, and Holston,—each a long rifle-shot in width, and so alike in their transparent limestone-water, that they seem the reflection of each other, keep their way almost at equal intervals; while their numerous tributary rivulets are delayed in seeking the main stream by a hundred interposing hills, that swell from the vales as boldly as if they would nod crest for crest with the loftier

mountain-ridges of which they appear to have once formed a part.

These main ridges are generally rocky, and sometimes, as is the case with the eastern side of the Cumberland range, they run in a precipitous wall for many miles; the gray rocks, capped with a vigorous growth of evergreens, rising in various fantastic shapes above the heavy forests which clothe their base. The intermediate valleys vary from a hundred rods to several miles in width. In some places, they are mere strips of meadow-land; in others, they are vast basins, presenting an agreeably undulating surface as you traverse them,* but seeming perfectly level when viewed from the belt of mountains by which they are encompassed. The country is well watered, and of great natural fertility; but agriculture is conducted in so slovenly a manner, that many fields are overgrown with mulleins, and in fact completely worn out. The mode of managing a farm appears to be, to cultivate a piece of land until it is exhausted, and then to clear a new field, leaving the old one to shoot up into brushwood, which, in a few years, serves for the cattle to browse upon. The "cattle ranges," however, are generally the

* The beautiful valley in which Abingdon is situated is one of these.

steep hill-sides, which habit teaches them to clamber; and more than once, when riding beneath a cliff, that projected from the mountain-brow and frowned over the road-side, I have seen a young bullock quietly ruminating upon his commanding position, immediately above me.

Since I last wrote to you, I have explored several more of those limestone caverns with which the country abounds; one of which, indeed, is said to extend, like an enormous cellar, beneath the village of Abingdon, a flourishing county-town about twenty miles from this place; but no cave that I have yet seen compares with the magnificent grotto at Cumberland Gap, which I have already attempted to describe to you. I have seen but one object of natural curiosity to compare with it, and that is THE NATURAL TUNNEL,* in Scott county. It is a vaulted passage-

* At the time of visiting this remarkable natural curiosity, the writer was not aware that any particular description had yet been given of it. He has since had pointed out to him an article in the American Journal of Geology, by Lieutenant-colonel Long, of the United States Engineers, which gives a scientific account of it, and from which he has borrowed the term Tunnel, in preference to adopting that of "Natural Bridge," by which it is known in the neighbourhood. The cavern in Scott county bears as close a resemblance to a tunnel, as does the celebrated Natural Bridge in Rockbridge county to the structure from which it takes its name.—See note.

way of two hundred yards, through a mountainous ridge some five or six hundred feet high. The ridge lies like a connecting mound between two parallel hills, of about the same elevation as itself; and a brook, that winds through the wooded gorge between these hills, appears to have worn its way through the limestone rib that binds the two together. The cavernous passage is nearly in the form of an S. The entrance, at the upper side, is through a tangled swamp; where, in following down the stream, you come in front of a rude arch, whose great height, from the irregular face of the cliff being covered with vines and bushes, it is difficult to estimate, until you attempt to throw a stone to the top of the vault. The ceiling drops a few yards from the entrance, till, at the point where, from the peculiar shape of the cavern, the shadows from either end meet in the midst, it is not more than twenty feet high. The vault then suddenly rises, and becomes loftier and more perfect in form as you emerge from the lower end. Finally, it *flares* upward, so that the edges of the arch lose themselves in the projecting face of the cliff, which here rises from a gravelly soil to the height of four hundred feet; smooth as if chiselled by an artist, and naked as death. At this point, the sides of the gorge are of perpendicular rock, and for

sixty or eighty yards, from the outlet of the tunnel, they slope away so gradually from its mouth as to describe a perfect semicircular wall, having the cavernous opening at the extreme end of the arc. On the left this mural precipice curves off to your rear, and sloping inwardly, impends at last immediately above your head. On the right the wall becomes suddenly broken, while a beetling crag shoots abruptly from the ruin to the height of three hundred feet above the stream that washes its base. The embouchure of the tunnel is immediately in front. Behind, the narrow dell is bounded by broken steeps hung with birch and cedar, and shaded with every tint of green, from the deep verdure of the hemlock to the paler foliage of the paw-paw and fringe-tree.* A more lovely and impressive spot the light of day never shone into. The sun was in the centre of the heavens as I stood beneath that stupendous arch, watching the swallows wheeling around the airy vault above me, and yet more than half the glen was in deep shadow. I had been told, whether jestingly or not, that the place was a favourite retreat for bears and panthers; and while following down the brook a few yards, I was somewhat startled, upon casting

* Chionanthus Virginica.

a glance into a recess in the rocky bank above me, to meet a pair of bright eyes glaring from the bushes which sheltered the nook. But the sudden movement of drawing a pistol frightened the wild animal from its covert, and it proved to be only an opossum, that glided along the trunk of a fallen tree and disappeared in the thickets above. I paused again and again, in retracing my steps through the sinuous vault, to admire its gloomy grandeur; and then mounted my horse, which was tethered in the swamp at its entrance. My road led immediately over the tunnel; but the thick forest on either side precluded a view from the top of the precipice, unless by approaching its edge. This it was necessary to do on foot. The glen thus viewed presents the appearance of a mere fissure in the mountain-side; but the chasm is so sudden and deep that the first glance is startling when your foot presses the edge; and your eye swims when it would pierce the shadowy gorge below. The tall sapling growth of buckeye and linden that spring within the dell, and lift their slender stems and sickly-coloured leaves so aspiringly, yet faintingly, towards the light, sink into mere shrubs when viewed from this eminence; while the pines and oaks around you, which had appeared equally insignificant when viewed from

below, seem now almost to interlace their branches over the gulf. A thrilling incident is said to have occurred here a few years since. There is a cavernous recess about midway in the face of the precipice, whose height, you will recollect, is estimated at more than three hundred feet; and some bold adventurer determined to be let down to explore this fissure. He easily found some of his acquaintance who consented to assist in the experiment; and standing on the edge of the chasm, they began to lower him down by a rope attached to his body. After descending some forty or fifty feet, our adventurer discovered that the side of the precipice shelved so much inwardly that it was impossible for him to touch the wall, even at so short a distance from the top. It was necessary then to provide some pointed instrument by which he could hold on to the face of the cliff as he descended. He was accordingly pulled up once more, and then, after providing himself with a "gig," or long fish-spear, much used in the adjacent rivers, he started anew upon his perilous voyage. The gig appeared to answer its purpose extremely well, though the task of thrusting it from time to time in the crevices of the rock, as the cord was gradually slacked from above, was both tiresome and exhausting. The point pro-

posed was just attained, and the patient adventurer was about to reap the reward of his toil, and plant his foot in the fissure, when his companions shouted from above that their coil of rope had run out. It was too provoking to be thus a second time disappointed, when his object seemed almost within his grasp, and but a few more yards of cord would have enabled him to complete his object. He had given too much trouble, and encountered too much peril, now to abandon his design completely. Thus reasoned the bold cragsman, as, clinging like a bat to the wall, he hung midway between heaven and earth; and determining not to give up his point, he shouted to his comrades to splice a *grape-vine* to the end of the rope! The substitute was easily procured, and being quickly attached, more line was at once payed out from above. He had now descended so far that the shelving precipice projected far over his head, almost like the flat ceiling of a chamber; but still his fishing-spear enabled him to keep close to the face of the rock, and practice now taught him to handle it with dexterity and confidence. He is at last opposite to the cavernous opening he would explore; and without waiting to measure its depth, he balances himself against a jutting point of rock with one hand, while the

other strikes his javelin at a crevice in the sides of the deep recess before him. The spear falls short; the adventurer is at once detached from the face of the cliff to which he had been so carefully adhering; and the great angle at which the rope that sustains him has been now drawn, sends him swinging like a pendulum over the frightful gulf. The grape-vine—so strong and secure as long as there is a perpendicular pull upon it—now cracks and splits as if its fibres could not bear the strain; while the weight at the end of it spins round in the air, and the frayed bark falls in strips upon the alarmed cragsman, as he watches it grate off upon the edge of the precipice above him. He maintains his self-possession, however, while his companions pull carefully and steadily upon the fragile cable. He soon sees the knot at which the rope is tied to it in their hands, and a shout of triumph hails his approach to the top, where he is at last safely landed; perfectly content, one may conceive, to forego all the pleasure that might have arisen from a more satisfactory examination of the recess, from which he had made so expeditious and involuntary an exit.

The hair-breadth escape of this cool climber of crags reminds me of one equally thrilling that I

received from the lips of the hero of it, soon after entering these mountains. But as I am now stopping at this place to recruit from a recent indisposition, I must reserve the incident to employ my leisure in another letter.

LETTER XLV.

Chilhowee Springs, May 8.

I had heard of a remarkable saltpetre cave, within a few miles of the inn where I was staying, at Cumberland Gap, and was anxious to explore it. There was an individual in the neighbourhood who was said to have worked in the cavern, in manufacturing saltpetre, at a time when there was a great demand for gunpowder, during the last war. This man I attempted to procure as a guide; but though he acted as a pioneer for me to several wild scenes, nothing could persuade him to take me to this. He at length, with some emotion, assigned his reasons; which will better appear after I have given you the features of the place, as they were described to me. The opening of the cavern is in west Virginia, on the side of the Cumberland Mountains; but one of its branches has been traced far into the adjacent State of Kentucky, and there are said to be several chambers of it in Tennessee. I have, myself, indeed, in exploring one of its supposed passages, that opened two miles from the

main embouchure, passed the dividing line of two of these States. The most direct of its branches has, in former years, been measured with a chain, to the extent of seven miles.* The form of the cavern is as remarkable as its size: as, just far enough within the entrance to shroud it in darkness, there is a precipice of more than 200 feet (262 is said to be the measured depth); and the only mode of advancing farther into the cave is by descending here, when you come to a flat surface, whereon your farther progress is unimpeded. The sides of the precipice are marked here and there by ledges of rock, and the persons employed in manufacturing saltpetre had, with considerable ingenuity, adjusted a chain of ladders from one ledge to another, so as to form, apparently, a continuous staircase down the perpendicular side of the cliff. At the close of the war, twenty years ago, the cave became deserted. The population then was not dense around, and there being but little travel along the nearest highway, the place was seldom mentioned, and never resorted to. It chanced one day, about six years since, that the man whom I wished now to guide me thither passed the mouth

* This, as the reader is probably aware, is nothing to the as yet unknown limits of the celebrated "Mammoth-cave" of Kentucky.

of the cavern, with a companion, in hunting. Sitting down near it, to refresh themselves, they began to recall their recollection of those who had worked in the cave in by-gone years; and the period seemed so recent, that they thought it worth while to look whether none of their implements, then used, were yet to be found in the pit; determining that any of the tools that might be left, after so long an interval, would be a fair prize for themselves. Entering the cavern, they first, by the light of a pine-torch, carefully examined the wooden ladders which had been now for sixteen years exposed to the damps of the place. They had been made of cedar, and still appeared sound. The cautious hunters agreed that all was right, and both descended. They reached the bottom in safety, and, as expected, they found several neglected tools still remaining there; and selecting a pickaxe and a spade, they commenced their ascent upon the ladders. The first flight was soon accomplished; but their steps became slower as they got farther from the bottom, and as the implements which they carried could not be balanced upon the shoulders, each had but one hand upon the ladder, and of course, as that became tired, each was compelled to move more and more carefully. Patience and steadiness, however, at last

brought them near the summit. In fact, the upper rung of the ladder was in view, when the foremost man taking hold of one more decayed than the rest, it broke in his grasp, and he fell backward with his whole weight upon the chest of his companion; the other reeled and staggered with the blow, but still kept his one-handed hold upon the ladder. The iron tools went clanging to the bottom. There was a moment of intense anxiety whether he could sustain his comrade; there was another of thrilling doubt whether his comrade could regain the ladder; and both were included in one mortal agony of fear and horror. But the falling man clutched the ladder instantly, and laying a frantic grip, with both hands, upon the sides, they gained the top, at last, together. "Stranger," concluded the man, while his voice faltered at the end of the tale, "we knelt to God at the mouth of that cave, and swore never to enter it more."

Some ten or twelve miles from the Tunnel, I stopped to dine with a cottager, whose establishment and reception were both marked by that union of poverty and politeness which characterizes the lower classes of western Virginians. He had nothing, he said, for me to eat, but I was welcome to what he had, if I could dine in a room with half a dozen sick children.

"Bacon and greens," as usual, was the dinner; and my host poured me out a good cup of coffee, while his wife was stilling the cries of an infant in her arms, and ministering to the wants of several little sufferers, on a trundle-bed, in one corner of the apartment. The good man told me that this was the only illness with which his household had ever been visited; "and as these are *the only relations I have*," he added, "I feel some concern to get them all upon their feet again; for I want to raise the whole of them."

In further conversation I found that the illness with which this family was afflicted was the scarlet-fever, which, with the measles and other similar complaints, seems to make up the brief list of diseases that find their way into this healthy region. The measles and scarlet-fever are now both prevailing to a great extent, and I am just recovering from a light attack of the latter, incurred, probably, by my visit to the cottager. I kept the saddle for a day or two, in hopes of the great panacea, exercise, overcoming even so virulent a complaint as this; but after holding out with difficulty until I reached Abingdon, I was glad to have recourse to lancet and powders, under the auspices of a physician; and I was so immured, during the few days which I passed at Abingdon,

that the bustling little court-town supplied me with nothing of particular interest to add to this letter; nor could I, perhaps, conclude it better than with the simple but thrilling relation of the cottager, whose isolated condition was so coolly alluded to by himself, in telling me of the illness of his children. The father of my host, who was a middle-aged man, had been among the early settlers of this mountain region; and the fact of his being now without any blood relations, except those collected around his own hearth, arose from all his kindred having perished in different border frays, many years since. His father's family had been cut off at a blow, while he was yet a child; and the story of their fate was to this effect:—

It was the season for gathering peaches, and drying them for winter use; and some of the early dwellers in these fertile valleys had already spread the sliced fruit on the sheds of their outhouses, to be acted upon by the declining but still ardent sun of summer. A clump of trees, richly laden with peaches, stood upon a knoll near the edge of the forest, and within a few hundred yards of the cabin of a settler. The owner of the cabin was away from home, and his eldest son had been sent over the hills upon some distant errand; while the mother of the family, with another son and a

daughter, were left to the care of an uncle of the children. They were all, one quiet August evening, collected around the hillock already mentioned; some were employed in stripping the trees of their prolific burthen, and some in filling their baskets with the balmy fruit, as it lay scattered upon the ground. The little girl had partly climbed a tree, and was engaged in handing the peaches within reach to her mother; the boy stood thrashing the drooping boughs by the side of his parent; but the uncle was separated from the group, while filling his basket from the ground on the other side of the knoll. As he stooped to pick up the fruit, a shot, a scream, and a bullet whistling over his head, told him, in a moment, that the dreaded savages were upon them. He looked, and the girl had tumbled from the tree, like a bird from a bough, upon the bosom of her mother. The sight of his agonized sister struck horror to the heart of the pioneer; but his experience of such scenes suggested that, all unarmed as he was, he must abandon her to her fate, and seek revenge hereafter, or be butchered, in vain resistance, upon the spot. Another scream from the phrensied mother, and he saw the hatchet of an Indian buried in the brain of the terrified boy, who clung to her for protection, as the demoniac

figure leaped, with uplifted arm, from a neighbouring thicket. Had he looked again, he might have seen the red hand of a savage twined in the locks of his unhappy sister: but horror had shut his heart upon her. He looked not, he waited not, till, shriek on shriek, her cries rung in his ears, each more piercing than the last. He knew that the shape of the hillock, on whose side he was standing, had hitherto screened his form from the keen eyes of the Indians; that his position gave him a chance of escape,—a start in the death-race; and he seized it with the eagerness of desperation. Fear lent him wings, and he had gained the cover of the wood before the savages had finished binding their captive, and scalping the children before the eyes of their mother: but her horrid cry echoed upon his brain like a death-peal, long afterward; and when, upon returning with his neighbours to the fatal scene of the catastrophe, her body could not be found beside those of her children, and her doom, as a prisoner, had been confirmed by other evidence, he disappeared from the country, and, like the unhappy woman herself, was never heard of more. The father of the family learned, at a distance, of the desolation which had fallen upon his household, and wandering to some remote spot on the border, he never returned to his ruined

home; while the last of the family, growing up to man's estate, now enjoyed the little patrimony of which I found him in possession, and of which these disastrous events had made him the only heir.

LETTER XLVI.

Parisburgh, Giles Co., West Virginia, May 13.

"You look faintish, sir," quoth mine host, ushering me into the bar-room, at the first inn where I stopped, after again finding myself well enough to resume my journey. "A julep, sir, by all means; let me recommend a julep. The table will not be spread in some time yet, and we Virginians think that there is nothing between a long ride and a late breakfast like a julep." Suiting the action to the word, the landlord poured a deep claret-coloured beverage from a pitcher that stood near, and handed me the renovating cup. But think not that the mild and refreshing draught which I placed to my lips bore any resemblance to the acrid and scorching mixture drank under the same name on board of steamboats and in taverns at the North. The various liquors that combine in a Virginia julep are mixed in very small quantities, and the flavour of each is made to blend so perfectly with the fragrant herb which imparts its aroma to all, that the mellow and

balmy cordial resembles more a cup of old metheglin than a recent compound. The use of this morning draught is deduced from that period when a gentleman of Queen Elizabeth's time stirred his tankard with a sprig of rosemary; and the custom of serving it round to the chambers of guests before breakfast is, I am told, still religiously observed by some of the old planters of Virginia. Like "the stirrup-cup" which is here handed you at the door of every cabaret when about to mount, and the "spiced posset" that is sometimes offered by mine host when about to retire for the night, it must be viewed as a relic of ancient manners, and not be thought to imply the existence of dissipated habits; for so far as my own observation has extended, there is not the least ground for such a stain attaching to the hearty hospitality of the West-Virginians and Kentuckians.

I spent a night at the flourishing town of Evansham in Wythe county, on my way from the Chilhowee Springs hither; and was well accommodated at a spacious inn which had a broad piazza extending along the whole front, with a pretty plot of shrubbery screening it from the street. The place was filled with country wagons and mounted yeomanry, which, with the display of goods in the various shops along the main street, gave it a busy

and thriving appearance. I fell in here with a young Carolinian, who had travelled thus far across the country on his way to the White Sulphur Springs; and being desirous of visiting that celebrated watering-place, I have consented to deviate so far from my direct route to Washington that we may travel together. My companion has brought a tilbury with him from the low-country, which is very much out of place in this mountain-region, and seems to be regarded with great curiosity by people who travel altogether on horseback. The roads are so bad, too, that my fellow-traveller is continually envying me my independent mode of travelling, as I pick my path where a wheel-carriage cannot get along, or move from the highway at pleasure to enjoy the beautiful views which continually open upon us. Nothing can be more lovely, grand, and peculiar than some of these. In one place, where we struck the Kenawha River, we had consumed some time in gaining the summit of a pine ridge by numerous winding ascents, which carried us so gradually from one acclivity to another till we had gained the topmost height, that it was only by catching through the trees an occasional glimpse of a cultivated valley behind that we could at all realize the great elevation to which we were attaining.

But even these glimpses were at last lost in a dark pine forest which thickened around us, and, closing the prospect before as well as behind, completely shut from view the sheer descent of the ridge on the opposite side, until we were on the very edge of the declivity. Here the road in descending made an abrupt turn, and being cut out of the precipitous hill-side, presented a most peculiar appearance when afterward viewed from below. This abrupt turn, however, was not perceptible from the top, until we had actually gained it; and the effect produced by looking a few yards in advance was that of glancing over a sheer precipice, to the edge of which you were apparently guiding your horse with a fated hand; and you might even begin to calculate how far the stunted evergreens that shot out from the bank-side, or the vine-webbed boughs which seemed netted so closely together in the moist valley below, would soften your sudden descent. The valley itself was but a few acres in extent, with a small cleared spot in the centre; and so completely was it hedged in by the spurs of several mountain-ridges which here interlaced, that the sun, when we first viewed it from above, appeared hardly to penetrate its bosom. Leading our horses down the declivity, we crossed a brook at its base, and emerging from

a grove of cedars, found ourselves upon the cleared spot we had observed from above. It proved to be an Indian burial-ground. A generation had probably passed away since it was abandoned by its original possessors; but the outlines of a few scattered graves were still perceptible around an ancient thorn-tree; and the close turf that spread its verdure about the place was skirted here and there with a haw-bush, or cluster of wild roses, growing on the edge of the forest that girdled the spot. A lonelier and a lovelier resting-place, or one more characteristic of the singular people who had chosen it for their slumbering dead, I have never beheld. A narrow grove was all that here intervened between us and the Kenawha, which, as it came roaring around the shoulder of a mountain, received, within a hundred yards, a tributary as large as itself. I loitered behind my companion to look upon the foaming river,—the only thing of life in a spot so still,—and the fearful tales of childhood rose fresh to memory, as I gazed upon the Kenawha and found myself insensibly humming a long-forgotten air that takes its name from its waters. It was the march that had rung through these glens when Lord Dunmore carried the flower of Virginia to the border,

to check the horrors of Indian vengeance.* A vengeance which, it must be admitted—now that the intervention of many years allows us to form a more impartial judgment upon the actors in those scenes—was provoked by the most intolerable wrongs. Some of these—singularly aggravated in character by attending circumstances—the pen of genius has long since rescued from oblivion;

* One division of this force, a thousand strong, was vanquished in open field by the united Delawares and Shawanees. The action, which lasted from dawn to sunset, was fought on the narrow point of land formed by the junction of the Ohio and Kenawha. Logan, Cornstalk, Elenipseco, and many other celebrated chiefs were present, and were often heard loudly encouraging their warriors. Cornstalk, sachem of the Shawanees, and leader of the northern confederacy (afterward so cruelly butchered by the whites—see note M), was particularly conspicuous. As the repeated charges of the whites became more warm and determined, the Indian line began to waver, and several were seen to give way. The heroic Shawanee was instantly upon the spot, and his pealing cry, "Be strong—be strong!" was heard distinctly above the din of the conflict. Like Dundee, he inflicted the punishment of cowardice upon the first recreant with his own hand. He buried his hatchet in the head of one of his warriors, and indignantly shaming the rest, completely restored the battle. It was in the treaty that followed this victory that the Mingoe chieftain Logan, while refusing to be included in it, delivered the celebrated speech which Mr. Jefferson has preserved in his Notes on Virginia, for the admiration of the world.—"*Jefferson's Notes*," "*Border Wars*," "*M'Clung's Sketches*," &c.

and the cold-blood butchery of the noble Mingoe's family has become the trite theme of the school-boy's declamation. But there were other provocations on the part of the whites which were more calculated to exasperate the Indians to implacable hostility, than even the black deed of Colonel Cresap. Such, in fact, was the atrocious murder of "The Bald Eagle," a Delaware chieftain, whose unmerited and shocking fate provoked his warlike nation to take a part in the Indian Rising, which preceded the treaty with the allied tribes in 1763. The story of this friendly and much-injured sagamore has been briefly told by more than one chronicler; but as I am now comfortably seated in "the *best* inn's *best* room" that the village of Parisburg affords, I know not how I can more agreeably while away the evening than in finishing this letter by recalling it here.

The tribe of "The Bald Eagle" had been long at peace with the whites. The aged sagamore had acquired their language, and become familiar with their manners. He was a frequent visiter at the fort erected at the mouth of the Kenawha; and the soldiers' children would sit upon the blanket of the kind old Indian, while he fitted the

arrows of reed to their mimic bows for them, and beguiled the sunny hours with some ancient legend of his people; traditions of their fabulous battles with the all-devouring Gitche-pezheke,* that would make young eyes dilate with wonder; and fearful tales of murdered chieftains who, when the baish-kwa (night-hawk) flitted through the wood, and the bright foot-prints gleamed along The Path of Ghosts,† would stalk round the lodges of their kindred, and whisper the story of their fate to the tardy avengers of blood within. Often, at noontide, or when the ruddy hues of sunset were softened on the bosom of the broad Ohio, his bark-canoe would be seen skimming the river, towards the fort, while the urchins ran down to meet the harmless old man, and supplied him with sweetmeats and tobacco, in return for the trifling presents he would bring them from his forest home—baskets of the flexile and delicate-hued birch, pouches of the variegated and platted porcupine-quills, and fillets woven by the daughters of the chief, from the flaming feathers of the moning-gwuna.‡ Twilight would come, and the whippoor-

* The fossil mammoth is thus named by the Indians.

† This is the name of the Milky Way among our northern tribes.

‡ The high-hold or golden-winged woodpecker.

will commence his evening call from the hill-side, while the garrulous ancient still lingered with his boyish playmates; but night again would find his frail shallop drifting down the stream, while, ever and anon, the chief would pause as he plied his paddle to return the salute of some friendly pioneer who, in the existing peace upon the border, had ventured to place his cabin on the shore.

Many months had passed away, and still with each returning week the children watched for their swarthy visiter; and never failed at last to see his paddle flashing behind some green promontory, and soon impelling his light canoe upon the beach beside them. But at length the chieftain came no more; the little gifts which they had prepared lost their novelty, and they longed in vain for the old Delaware to string their bows anew, or to bring them wild plums from the islands, and the rich fruit of the paw-paw from over the river; and still The Bald Eagle came not. The white hunters could tell nothing of him, and the few settlers along the stream declared that they had last seen him floating safely past their cabins, with pipe in mouth as usual, and wending his way to the village of his tribe far down the river; but the neighbouring Indians no longer brought them venison and wild-honey from the wood, their otter-traps had

been withdrawn from the cane-brake, and the light of their torches was no more seen upon the river, guiding them in the favourite sport of spearing the fish that teem in its waters.

The garrison was not dismayed at the ominous silence; yet the sudden cessation of all intercourse between themselves and the Indians threw a gloom over the little community. There was one among their number who could have unravelled the mystery; it was one who, like the murderer of Logan's family, had forged at least one link in the monstrous chain of injury which was at this moment knitting the neighbouring tribes together in bitter hostility to the whites,—it was the assassin of The Bald Eagle. This man, as it afterward appeared, had suffered from the Indians in former years, and in compliance with a vow of vengeance against the whole race, he had waylaid the friendly Delaware on his lonely voyage down the river, and murdered him within a short distance of the fort. The deed was done in darkness and in silence. The superannuated warrior could make but feeble resistance against the athletic and implacable backwoodsman. The fated savage pleaded vainly for a moment, in which to sing his death-song, but the heart of the Indian-hater was steeled against the

appeal, and the atrocious violence was consummated with equal secrecy and despatch.

But the blood of the victim was yet to cry from the ground.

The revengeful pioneer had accomplished his first purpose of taking the life of an Indian: he was not contented, however, until he had added insult to injury; and with ingenious cruelty ensured that full knowledge of the outrage should reach the friends of the unhappy subject of it; and thus he proceeded to the accomplishment of his iniquitous purpose:—he first scalped the hoary crown of the old Delaware, and next fixing the body in the usual sitting posture in the stern of the canoe, he carefully replaced the pipe in his mouth, and adjusted the steering-paddle to the hand of the corpse, which soon stiffened around it. A direction was then given to the boat that bore this ghastly burden, and the stream quickly swept it far beyond his view. The abruptness of the river's bank, and the rapidity of the current near the shore, prevented the doomed bark from stopping in its career, and hurried it on the voyage for which it was so fearfully freighted. The settlers on the river's side recognised the well-known canoe and accustomed form of him that steered

it, and dreaming not of the fate that had overtaken its master, they saluted him, as usual, from the shore; but when they hailed, no friendly whoop replied to the call; they beckoned, but the grim boatman heeded not; the shallop still went on, for the hand that guided kept it steadily on its way. The wild deer, drinking from the wave, started at the shadow, as it glided before him; the raven snuffed the tainted form, and hovered above its gory head, yet dared not to alight beside that motionless and stern voyageur. And still that bark kept on. But now it has neared the home of the murdered sagamore; and, like a steed that knows the dwelling of its master, it seems to be making unerringly for that green headland where the friends of the loved sachem are waiting the wonted hour of his return.

What more is there to add?—the dumb messenger fulfilled his mission. The neighbouring bands at once dug up the tomahawk, and runners were instantly despatched to the remoter tribes: the bloody war-belt passed like lightning along the border: the peaceful Mingoes had wrongs of their own to avenge, and needed not to read its mystic wampum; but the red-handled hatchet was shaken alike among the deep forests of Ohio, on the sunny prairies of Illinois, and in the dark glens of Penn-

sylvania; while by the thousand lakes of New-York, the warlike bands that haunted those crystal waters clutched with eagerness the fearful emblem.

The allotted days of fasting had passed by for the friends of the murdered Delaware; the black hue of mourning was washed from their indignant brows; and, ere the crimson die of battle had dried upon their cheeks, the banks of the Ohio resounded with the war-whoop; while the burning of their cabins, and the massacre of their neighbours, gave the terrified settlers the first intimation of the foul murder on the Kenawha.

The horrors of the war of retaliation thus commenced, continued to rage until Lord Dunmore's expedition put a period to the strife; and the dwellers on the shore that was coasted by the dead boatman would long after shudder when they remembered *The last errand of the Bald Eagle.*

LETTER XLVII.

Parisburg, Giles County, West Virginia, May 14.

The village near which I have passed the last two days is more romantically situated than any I have yet seen in Virginia. It lies in a deep valley, at the base of an isolated mountain, which rears its pyramidal form so far above the surrounding hills that it is popularly known by the name of "The Angel's Rest." It was towards sunset when we approached the place, and the young men of the village were collected on a green adjacent to our inn, and engaged in the sport of tossing a cannon-ball for a wager. The players were divided into two parties; one of which would first have exclusive possession of the ball, while each member would throw it as far as possible in advance of the place where it last fell,—the final throw sometimes carrying the heavy missile a quarter of a mile from the point where it was first started. The opposite side would take it up at this spot, and if their successive throws returned the ball to its starting-place, and carried it beyond, they had won

the game. The sport is so simple as to exhibit neither grace nor skill, but it is a very good method of testing the aggregate and relative strength of two bodies of men. The men who were playing were of a strong and sinewy make, and of about the middle size. The Patagonian race for which these mountains, like those of Vermont, are celebrated, is confined entirely, so far as my observation extends, to a generation that is now almost extinct. Dr. C., of the Transylvania University, a distinguished physiologist, and who would be regarded as a tall man even in Kentucky, had spoken to me particularly about the gigantic race of men that I should find among these his native hills; but so long as I travelled with my friend Professor L., we met no two individuals who could count "twelve feet two" between them, like ourselves. There was one young man, indeed, at Manchester, in Kentucky, who had some six inches the advantage of either, and towered a giant between us; but, like the gold-hunting Hibernian, who threw away the coin upon which he stumbled when his foot first touched the shore of promise, I omitted to run down this native and take his dimensions, as I expected soon to get where specimens were thicker. Since then I have seen several aged individuals, both male and female, of three

score and upwards, whose towering forms and huge proportions, still apparent through the decrepitude of age, amply sustained the representations of Dr. C.: but the generation that is now in its prime is by no means remarkable for either size or make; nor does it excel in either respect the ordinary run of men at the north. It is now generally conceded, I believe, and so far as my own observation has extended I am convinced of the fact, that the largest race of men in the Union, if not in the world, are those inhabiting the Valley of the Mississippi,—an alluvial, and not a mountainous country. I had a good opportunity of remarking upon this while at Jefferson Barracks. The dragoons stationed there were all Americans; in the infantry there were many Europeans: one company of the former had been recruited in New-England and New-York, one in Indiana, and one in Missouri. The average height of the western recruits appeared to me to be much greater than that of their northern comrades, and far to overtop that of the European soldier. The last, however, holds himself so much more erect than either of the others, that it requires a nice eye to discriminate the difference in their size; in activity, the northern men yielded to neither. The existence of a powerful race of men in Vermont and Western

Virginia, soon after the settlement of these regions, may be accounted for in the same way that the absence of deformity among the Indians is explained. The hardships to which the pioneers were exposed prevented any but the most vigorous of their children from surviving the trials to which their constitutions were subjected; while the mothers that bore them were, judging from the few survivors that I have seen, large and athletic, far beyond the generality of their sex. What woman, indeed, unless she had the frame, the endurance, and the courage of an amazon, could, after following the pioneer to the wilderness, help him to build his cabin of logs, and use his heavy rifle in its defence when her husband was absent, as many a female has done on the border. But if it be true, as some have asserted, that the native tribes in the Valley of the Mississippi are of a larger make than those found on the other side of the Alleghanies, there are probably other physical causes, more dependent upon soil and climate, operating to produce this greater development of the human form. The subject, however, has been so learnedly handled by graver and more ingenious pens, that you will readily dispense with my pursuing it here.

I have spent to-day in visiting a very remark-

able spot in the neighbourhood of this place. It is called the Salt Pond Mountain. A ride of twelve miles through a rough but picturesque country carries you to the top of one of the highest peaks of the Alleghanies, where a deep *tarn* lies nestled in a notch on the summit, as snugly as if the bowl that held it had been scooped out for a Titan's drinking-cup. The pool is in the form of a crescent, about a quarter of a mile in length, and limpid as the mountain air around it. It is said to be more than a hundred feet in depth. The bottom of this singular lake is a submerged forest, whose tall pines and hemlocks still lift their tops to within a few yards of the surface; and, when standing on the banks, you may see the green boughs "of other days," like the fabled towers of Lough Neagh,

"In the wave beneath you shining."

The lake, too, like another* which the music-breathing verse of Moore has immortalized, is said never to be ruffled by the dip of the swallow's wing, nor to reflect the form of the eagle that sails round the mountain pinnacles near it. Our guide told us, with solemn visage, that the wild deer,

* "——that lake whose gloomy shore
Skylark never warbles o'er."

even when most hotly pursued, would not take to this gloomy water; myriads of lizards, which swarmed in it near the shore, appeared to be the only tenants of the mysterious pool. The account of its origin is not less peculiar. The spot which the tarn now occupies is said to have been originally a deep hollow, or mountain glen, with one small marshy spot at the bottom. It was heavily wooded, and being completely sheltered from the winds, the early settlers of the country, whose cattle browsed upon these mountains, would resort to this convenient place for the purpose of "salting" them, at the usual season; and it is from this that the term "Salt Pond" is derived, as the water is not at all brackish. After the lapse of several years, they observed that the fenny spot at the bottom of the dell gradually increased in size, until the whole level space was converted into a swamp. A lively spring would then here and there ooze through the marshy surface, till at last it was covered with water. The wild flowers that shot rankly above the moist margin, were soon after tossing their leaves upon the strange element. The still taller fern upon the hill-side was next invaded; and then the tassels of the weeping birch, and the white blossoms of the fringe-tree, floated upon the bosom of the swelling tide.

At last the boughs of ancient oaks began to dip, while the rising wave still mounted higher and higher, till the cone of the loftiest pine lay far beneath the surface of the lake, whose new-born billows rippled against the mountain pinnacles around.* The outlet is now a gap in the mountain-side, where the water escapes as over a mill-dam. The absence of fish in the pond thus formed will sufficiently account for its not being frequented by wild-fowl; and the fact of the hunted deer's not taking here to the water is easily explained by the embarrassment which the submerged trees would offer to his swimming.

About half a mile from the Salt Pond there is a rocky and bold eminence, which commands the finest mountain view I have yet seen in Virginia. It is said to be rivalled only by that from the "Peaks of Otter," in eastern Virginia, whose blue forks are easily perceptible from this distant point. The height is so much elevated above the surrounding ridges, which lead off their narrow crests on every side, that you look directly into the bosom of the intermediate valleys. Some of these are so shadowed by the wooded summits, that they appear only like deep furrows in an even

* "Pulsabantque novi montana cacumina fluctus."—Ovid.

surface,—dark ravines seaming a broad forest,—while a wider strip of cultivation, a hamlet, or a cluster of plantations will diversify the appearance of others, and give a more smiling appearance to the landscape. On the opposite sides of this eminence, and near the top, are two springs within gunshot of each other. The waters of the one flow into a tributary of James River, and are ultimately discharged into the Atlantic through Chesapeake Bay; the stream of the other, which is the outlet of the tarn already described, unites with the Kenawha,—and thus, through the Ohio and Mississippi, communicates with the Gulf of Mexico. The poetic Greeks would have made a Péneus and Achelöus of these twin-born rills, which, rising like those classic brooks on the same mountain, unite again in the ocean a thousand miles away.

LETTER XLVIII.

White Sulphur Springs, May 20.

I had learned at Parisburg that some interesting Indian remains had been discovered in the vicinity; and among other relics I was shown a tomahawk of brass, dug up in the neighbourhood, which I vainly attempted to purchase. There were persons here, too, who, like many I have met in Kentucky and western Virginia, pretended frequently to have seen gigantic human skeletons on turning up the soil; and when my companion, the young physician already mentioned, smiled incredulously at the idea, there were several who volunteered to accompany us a mile or two on our journey, and assist in making some examination at a point where it was supposed that these bones might yet be found. The scene of our operations was a beautiful alluvial bottom on the banks of the Kenawha, where a *cairn* composed of large stones reposed in the midst of a ploughed field, equal in size to a tolerable farm. Among others of our party was a well-informed person,

who seemed much pleased with the interest that I manifested in relation to the spot, and answered every inquiry I made regarding it with great politeness. He was unable, however, to state any thing more satisfactory than that there was a lively superstition existing in the neighbourhood in relation to the cairn,—it being a prevalent belief, that however the stones of which it was composed might be scattered over the plain, they were sure soon after to be collected again upon the identical spot where they were first found: a phenomenon which I easily accounted for to myself, upon observing that these were the only stones in the field, and being so large as to interfere with the action of a plough, it was natural that the husbandman, when they broke his furrow, should from time to time return them to the central position where I now beheld them. We now removed a number of these stones from the surface, and displaced the soil for a few yards around; but found nothing but some human teeth, and pieces of scull that crumbled in our fingers as we raised them from the earth. Nor was there any thing about them remarkable either in size or appearance. The Virginians appeared to be much chagrined at the unsatisfactory result of our labours, and urged me warmly to remain another day and

explore a different place; but my companion was impatient to pursue his journey, and I did not think the prospect would repay me for the loss of his company. We shook hands with our brother resurrectionists, and resumed our route.

We crossed the Kenawha near this point, and our road then led for many miles along this romantic river. Here the bold crags, the highly cultivated bottoms, the verdurous forest, and the full flowing river combined in the loveliest succession of landscapes, which changed every moment like a shifting diorama. Evening found us at the Red Sulphur Springs,—a mineral spa that is beginning to be much frequented, and which recommends itself to the traveller, as well as the invalid, by a large and well-kept hotel lately erected. It lies buried in a deep gorge of the hills, and must have been quite a picturesque spot before some Gothic hand swept the forest from the neighbouring heights.

The Salt Sulphur Springs, another watering-place very popular in Virginia, was our stopping-place the next night; and here, though so early in the season, we found several persons already arrived to drink the waters. During the evening I had an interesting conversation with a gentleman of a scientific turn of mind, in relation to the use

of "the divining rod;"* and I gathered from what he said, that a belief in the ancient science of rhabdomancy was as current in these parts as it ever was in the land of Odin. Some strange stories were told of the successful resort to this magical wand in discovering springs in the neighbourhood; and I could not help thinking, while observing the gravity with which they were received, that the mystical successors of the Zahuris of Spain who enacted Dousterswivel in these parts had shown considerable shrewdness in selecting so well-watered a region for their operations, and a people who deal so little in matters of fact as the western Virginians for their pupils.

* The art of discovering veins of water concealed in the bowels of the earth, by a direct perception of their existence, is mentioned by Kieser in his System of Tellurism as existing from the most remote periods; and notwithstanding the ridicule which this branch of magical lore has met with in modern times, it still has its votaries among philosophers and physiologists. A treatise which is mentioned as having lately appeared in Paris is probably the last addition to the numerous works upon the subject to be found in the libraries of the curious,—many of which the reader will find enumerated in Lieber's Lexicon. The mode of using the divining rod he is doubtless familiar with from the humorous scene in The Antiquary, where the credulous Sir Arthur Wardour and his single-hearted daughter are so well grouped with the shrewd Scotch antiquarian and the impudent German adventurer.

In no part of the Union, unless perhaps in the old Dutch settlements along the Hudson or Mohawk, will you find so many current superstitions as among these mountains. I remember, many miles farther to the south-west, being overtaken one evening by a manly-looking lad, who was driving a somewhat fractious bull along the road, and who, finding it difficult to keep up with me, asked imploringly, but with some shamefacedness, that I would not travel so fast, "until we had passed the haunted sink." He told me, with quick breath, as I reined up near one of those remarkable hollows resembling an inverted cone which one meets with everywhere in the western country where the limestone strata prevails, that after a certain hour of the night a black goblin could be seen, every now and then, bobbing up and down in the dark bowl; and that no one ever paused in passing the place after nightfall. I rode up to the spot, and agreed, upon the first glance into the hollow, that it was a suitable place for the Erle King, or Black Huntsman of the Hartz, to nestle in. But as these gentlemen, according to the best authorities, go on horseback, the retreat was objectionable from there being no room to stable their steeds. Upon surveying the ground more minutely, I observed that there were several nut-

bearing trees around the margin of "the sink," whose fruit when ripe would naturally roll down its sides to the bottom. A glance at the neglected fences of a neighbouring plantation suggested the rest. But it was impossible to persuade the credulous boy, that while the nuts thus collected would lure the hogs hither, the funnel shape of the hollow, by making it impossible for a four-footed beast to preserve a steady footing while feeding upon them, would sufficiently account for the Bobbing Demon of the Haunted Sink.

The White Sulphur Springs, where I have now been a day or two, is, you are aware, one of the most celebrated watering-places in the Union; second alone to Saratoga in the concourse of strangers it brings together every season, and not even rivalled by the Lebanon Springs of New-York in beauty of situation. The attractions of both of these favourite places of resort may be said to be united here. The company, though not so numerous, is more diversified than that of Saratoga; and the scenery, though not, like that of Lebanon, embalmed in the descriptions of Miss Sedgwick, wants only a pen gifted as hers to make its superior beauties appreciated. Of the respective merits of the different mineral waters I say nothing, for the guide-books are particular

enough upon that score; and not one of fifty people that frequent a watering-place trouble themselves with their analysis. The arrangements for visiters are very different at the Virginia springs from those usual among us. There are no large hotels as at Saratoga; but the lodgers have separate *cabins*,—built sometimes of brick, not unfrequently of boards, and more often of hewn logs. These are generally ceiled and finished inside. They are placed in the care of a black servant, who has the complete charge of one or more, and who waits upon the inmate as long as he occupies the room.

These cabins are built in ranges around an open green, which is often, as is the case with the White Sulphur, shaded by noble trees. There are spacious stables adjacent; and here again a particular groom becomes responsible for the care of your horse while you remain. The meals are taken at a table d'hôte, in a large frame-building, where the *manager* has his residence. The general arrangement is good, the attendance particularly so; but, for a place like "The White Sulphur," frequented by persons of wealth and leisure, from every part of our widely extended Union, and where the nett receipts for a single year are said to equal a moderate fortune, there is a slovenliness

and want of refined economy in many of the details. I am glad to see, however, upon looking over the list of last year's visiters, that our northern people are finding their way to this naturally favoured spot. There are many agreeable intimacies formed here by cultivated persons from the south and west, who have been long in the habit of shaking hands annually on the summit of the Alleghanies; and it is time that we should be represented in such accomplished and agreeable company. If the tour were more common with people of leisure from the north, it would tend much to root out the prejudices which three generations of pedlers have sown everywhere south of the Potomac and west of the Alleghanies; and if it did not suggest epithets for the character of a northerner in unison with "courtly Carolinian," "generous Kentuckian," and "chivalric Virginian," in such liberal use among *us*, it might, at least, extinguish associations which are any thing but flattering, and clear the field for more engaging *soubriquets* to grow up afterward.

But it is not alone the magnificent scenery and the society of the cultivated that rewards the western tourist, while stopping at such a place as this, for there is enough that is original in character and interesting in manners amply to remunerate

one who should prosecute his excursion farther over the mountains, and mingle familiarly with the ordinary inhabitants of the country. In doing this, the traveller, in whatever garb he may present himself, will everywhere be received with courtesy, provided he be a *gentleman;* and in emphasizing this word, I would have you to understand the term in its real and not its conventional meaning, in the *Chesterfieldian* and not the *exclusive* sense of the word; for among a people so high-spirited and independent in character as our tramontane population, the least manifestation of exclusiveism will provoke insult from the uneducated classes, and meet with the coolest contempt from those who, knowing more of society, can estimate puppyism at its real worth. The perfect feeling of equality that exists in the agricultural districts has a happy effect upon the manners of the people generally, and produces a quiet independence of demeanour that in older communities is only found among the members of particular circles that meet upon the same footing together. There is no petulant assertion of place with a true-born west countryman, because he never dreams that his privileges are questioned. He enters into conversation with you as an equal; and if you show no disposition to talk, provided you do not do it in

an offensive manner, he merely votes you "bad company," and salutes as politely at parting as when you met. This easy but unobtrusive and manly manner is rarely attained by emigrants of the same class from the Atlantic States; and foreigners of a similar condition in life never acquire it. The west countryman, in chatting with you with the confidence of an equal, always preserves the decorum of a stranger; but the Atlantic emigrant, in aiming to copy him, often mistakes familiarity for frankness, and impertinence for equality. I remember once on the prairies of Illinois being much amused at the way in which these characteristics displayed themselves in a Kentuckian and a Yankee, who were my companions in a day's ride. They were both young men, in an humble walk of life, who had come there with slight means to seek their fortunes: the Kentuckian, as I stepped into the sleigh, remarked upon the coldness of the ride, and observed that he was happy to have another companion in crossing the prairie; at the same time, in a quiet way, he entered at once into conversation with me. The Yankee, who was the best dressed and, as I subsequently found, by far the most intelligent of the two, seemed at first a little shy; but observing that his friend and I were upon very good terms,

he thought it was due to himself to make one of us, and he broke ground, at last, like an earthquake. "Come, H——," he cried—(he had learned my name at an inn)—"come, stop talking to Bill, and give us a song. I always like a song when I'm riding!"

Now, as I have before remarked, you may often among the real western people meet with traits of savageism, but never of intrusive vulgarity,—certainly nothing like the offensive familiarity of this fellow; and the man that speaks with a semi-barbarous recklessness of the value of human life will be among the last to violate the amenities of society. Of the upper classes of western society I have said but little; for, allowing for the slight difference of national customs, these are the same all the world over; and whether a man smokes in his parlour like an American, eats covered like a Turk, or washes his greasy fingers at a dinner-table like an Englishman,—the general tone of sentiment and manner is not affected by these national peculiarities. I might, indeed, divert you by serving up the particular arrangements of some especial families with whom I have been domesticated; but you would hardly wish your friend to prove a traitor to the laws of hospitality, and violate the first obligations of social life. Let us look, then,

into the middle classes, and examine the materials from which the bucks and dandies,—the Pelhamite and Tom-and-Jerry creations of our northern cities,—are manufactured. Here again the same difference is observable; and however many boors you may find in this region of society, you meet with but few puppies,—you still have the substratum of a gentleman;* for a boor, however rude, may be polished; but, as Chesterfield has remarked, "once a coxcomb, always a coxcomb." By-the-way, you must not think, from my thus a second time referring to the great courtier as authority in these matters, that I approve of the sentiments of his once so much read and still unrivalled letters, further than they relate to mere external deportment. In this point of view—barring some of the tedious formalities of the old school—they still constitute the best text-book of manners in the language. The rules laid down are based upon true philosophy, because (oddly as it may sound) they are both republican and Christian-like, and applicable, not merely to a court or a fashionable circle, but to

* The preceding comments upon western character are made chiefly in relation to the Kentuckians, among whom alone it may be found in perfection; but whose traits of nationality are so forcible, that they have impressed themselves upon the general character of the western people.

the world at large. They are republican, because they teach that good-breeding and exclusiveism are incompatible with each other; and they are Christian-like, for they imply benevolence as the soul of good manners: they teach that general consideration which should be extended to the self-love of every one; that impressive politeness and kindness of demeanour which comprehends the humblest within its winning circle, which is practised towards all from an inward feeling of refined humanity, and not awarded to each as they may establish their proportionate claim to consideration. The great difference between Lord Chesterfield's doctrine and the tenets now in fashion—as exemplified in the man of breeding of his day and the man of ton of ours—is, that the first was always to study what was due to his neighbour, and the last must be ever on the qui vive as to what is due to himself: the former was presumed to be so much of a gentleman ingrained that he could not be affected by courteous intercourse with his inferiors; the latter seems to be held so precariously polished that the slightest contact with any object less soft and smooth than himself may brush the golden flower from his butterfly-wings, and subject him to a loss of caste: the Chesterfield gentleman was born of the world, and

meant to shine in it; he that superseded him came from a London parish, and is suited to no other atmosphere: and with these reflections, so appropriate to a log-cabin on the top of the Alleghanies, I will conclude this letter; but not before advising you, that if any of your friends would flee from the flood of cockneyism which is gradually inundating our eastern cities, they may find an Ararat among the mountain-peaks around me.

LETTER XLIX.

Greenville, Augusta Co., Virginia, May 25.

I arrived at this place to-day from the White Sulphur Springs, by the way of the Panther Gap. It was a few hours after dawn that, on leaving the Springs, I found myself on the summit of the Alleghanies, and stopped to let my horse drink from a spring which soon formed a fine trout-brook,* and was the first stream that I had seen running eastward. I endeavoured to catch a view of the broad valley which lay between me and the Blue Ridge, whose singular wall was yet to be passed before I should be out of west Virginia; but a dozen detached mountain-ridges filled up the extensive tract between, and where the deep forests did not at once limit the prospect below, these broken links of the Appalachian chain soon swelled before the eye, and bounded its view on whichever side it was directed. I slept that night at a little inn kept by an old German, situated on the bank of a

* It is said that there are no trout to be found west of the Alleghanies.

rural stream, amid whose willows the whippoor-wills kept up an incessant call to each other long after midnight. These singular birds, which are so capricious in their haunts at the north, seem to abound everywhere among these mountains; and you become so used to their querulous note from nightly hearing it, that you at last love the plaintive whistle, and find that its monotonous repetition lulls you agreeably to repose.

I breakfasted the next morning at the *Hot Springs;* and took the opportunity, while my coffee was preparing, of enjoying a bath of the mineral water, where in one place it fills a reservoir large enough to swim in. The ordinary temperature of these springs is 112°, though they will sometimes boil an egg. The table and attendance at the hotel are very good, and great improvements are going forward in the bathing establishments.

Neither the Hot Springs, however, nor any thing in the way of luxurious bathing that I have ever seen, can compare with the delightful bath to be had at the *Warm Springs*, which are six miles from the others. There is here a large reservoir in the shape of an octagon, enclosed in a spacious wooden building. The reservoir is built of stone, with a natural pebbly bottom, through which the tepid water oozes in perfect purity. The building

is open at the top, and admits the noonday sun into a fountain so pellucid that the smallest object can be seen upon the bottom. The water rises to the chest of a tall man, and is spread over a surface large enough to exercise the swimmer. The ordinary temperature is 96° Fahr.

The building which covers this delightful bath is shabby and ruinous. But art, however it might improve the accessories, could add nothing to the luxuriousness of the bath itself. The bath I had already taken at the Hot Springs in the morning did not prevent me from spending an hour or two in the delicious water here; and making up my mind after the first plunge that I had never met with any thing so grateful, I ordered dinner and a bed at the hotel, and returned to the spring more than once before betaking myself to the latter. Morning again found me at the bath; but after breakfast I resumed my journey. Ascending then a mountainous ridge which bounds the springs on the east, I attained an elevation which is said to command a view of thirty miles in advance, and beheld my whole day's journey spread out before me. The prospect, though it had great sameness, was exceedingly beautiful as a whole. There was an ocean of forest below, and the hilly ridges that traversed it, flecked here

and there with white spots, indicating the buildings of the plantations that skirted their sides, showed like breaking waves upon its green surface; while the glitter of the foliage, as the morning mist rolled from the upland, sustained the semblance of a freshening sea.

Descending into the valley, the air became extremely sultry towards noon; and after striking a little stream called the Cow-pasture River, I was glad to loiter beneath the trees that skirted the cool water. Here, as I moved slowly along the margin of the stream, where a rocky bank rose some fifty feet above the road on the opposite side, I was surprised to feel a slight breeze upon the side of my face towards the rocks. I drew up at once, and observing the wild flowers bending away from the mouth of a small cavern on my left, I justly concluded that this must be the celebrated Blowing Cave, which has so much puzzled the curious. The mouth of the cavern is in the face of a cliff, which rises precipitously from a broken bank that slopes between its base and the road. I tied my horse to a grape-vine, and climbed to the opening of the airy cell. There throwing myself on the long grass before it, I could not withstand the dangerous temptation—fatigued and heated as I was—of taking off my stock, and

baring my bosom to the cool draught, while drinking it in as if it were nepenthe. The excessive bathing of the previous day, and the noontide heat which now prevailed, made me feel too languid and indolent to think of examining the cave, and indeed the fissure appeared too small to admit of its being explored to any depth; nor did I, as I lay there luxuriating in the moist breeze, care whether the zephyrs that fanned me were born of a Naiad deep-locked in the mountain,* or whether their gelid wings had been fledged in the ice-house of ancient Nicholas himself.

"Good day, sir; I reckon you're looking for the Blowing Cave, sir," called out a horseman, drawing up in the road opposite to me. I replied that I was at this moment before the cave. "Well, now," rejoined this inquisitive wight, "I was going to tell you that you must be pretty near it. I've heard a great deal about that same cave; but though I've gone by it continually these ten years along past, this is the first time I've seen a man get off his horse to look at it. I declare I've a great mind to come myself! Does it blow much, stranger?" He concluded, however, that it was too much trouble to dismount; and finding that I

* A subterranean waterfall is generally ascribed as the cause of the phenomenon of the Blowing Cave.

was going the same road with himself, he determined to wait for me, till I "got through seeing the cave." And there he sat in the broiling sun within pistol-shot of the cool cell, and neither heat, nor curiosity, nor jeering could shake him from the saddle. At last, when I thought that his patience must be completely exhausted in waiting for me, I gathered a handful of flowers from the many that flourished in the moist breath of the cave, and resuming my horse, jogged on with the civil stranger.

I parted from him towards nightfall, when, entering one of the most romantic districts I have seen, I found company enough in the picturesque scenery around me. It was in the mountainous tract among the head-waters of James River. In one place the abrupt and heavily-wooded ridges interlace their spurs so closely that the gorge between is not discernible until you enter it. In another, their bases sweep off in majestic curves, which girdle in a broad and sunny amphitheatre of cultivated fields and meadows. Here the fertile meadows of a narrow valley meander like a soft lake between their wooded heights; and there a savage torrent thunders through the cloven crags, and threatens the narrow pathway that follows its impetuous course. The Panther Gap, which is the

last of these glens, is one of the finest mountain-passes I have seen. The prodigious height and sheer descent of the parted cliffs, that appear to have been torn asunder to form the passage, with the redundant forest growth at their base, give both dignity and richness to the scene. Looking from the bottom of the narrow dell, you know not whether most to admire the towering crag that cleaves the sky above you, or the fragrant thickets of laurel and magnolia, that, blossoming at its foot, essay to climb the knees of their rugged parent.

Soon after emerging from the Panther Gap, I chanced to pass a farm-yard, where a blue-eyed and buxom country girl was just stepping over the fence with a pail of milk in her hand, as I issued from a grove and reined up near her. She paused for a moment to draw her dress over a tight ankle that rested on the middle rail, and then, with blushing cheeks, informed me that her father could accommodate me for the night,—the nearest inn being many miles off. The house stood remote from the road, at the end of a long lane; and dismounting to let down the bars, I took my bridle in my hand, and, guided by the young woman, soon presented myself before her family, by whom I was hospitably entertained and lodged for the

night. The rooms of the farm-house—though the establishment was large enough to be very comfortable—were separated from each other by a board partition only; and every thing said or done within the outer walls was distinctly audible through the flimsy wainscot. But I had been so accustomed to the most piquant vicinities, while sharing their single-roomed lodge with the blooming family of many a settler in the far west, that I now, on retiring early to rest, sunk to slumber without being at all molested by the murmur and the movement round me.

LETTER L.

Charlottesville, East Virginia, June 2d.

An early breakfast, and a kind farewell from the tight lass who had introduced me into this hospitable farm-house, sent me in good spirits on my journey the next morning; and arriving at Greenville to dinner, I learned that I was within forty miles of Jefferson's Natural Bridge, and determined to visit it. Accordingly, the next morning I left my valise at the excellent inn where I had passed the night, and took my road on horseback across the country. My route led through a beautiful valley along the western base of the Blue Ridge, whose purple summits were relieved against a magnificent volume of clouds, which, rolling their rich masses on the easy breeze, would now give a hundred shadows to play on the undulating fields carved out of the woody hill-side, and now bare the blue space above and the green meadows below alike to the full sunlight.

It was Sunday morning, and the roads were filled with gay equestrians, or negroes on foot, all

dressed out in their best apparel, and trooping off to display their finery at the nearest church. Here you would see a score of mountain lasses, with scarlet saddle-cloths, and gaudy plaids flung over their laps and depending from the stirrup, as a substitute for the cumbersome riding-skirt,—with no male in attendance, except perhaps a little negro, ensconced, like the goblin page, on the crupper, and grinning with delight to be thus chosen to wait on his young mistress; and there, taking their way over the fields, and stopping to sun themselves on every fence they came to, a gang of dandy-looking blackees,—each with an enormous cudgel, in lieu of the gold-headed whalebone which is elsewhere so much in vogue. Occasionally a solitary horseman would raise his broad-brimmed white beaver to me, as, issuing from some green lane, he took the dusty highway; and entering into easy chat, we would jog along for a mile or two together. Amid all these indications of a populous and long-settled country, I met with one group that seemed singularly placed in scenes so cultivated.

Beneath the boughs of a mossy oak, that stood in a verdant swale by the road-side, reclined an Indian female with an infant at her bosom; while a long-haired Tennessean in a hunting-shirt, who

proved to be her husband, was engaged in broiling some fish over a fire a few yards off. A half-blooded wolf-dog lay at the feet of the woman, with a young boy curled up asleep between the outstretched legs of the savage-looking animal; his chubby cheek reposing upon its grizzly crest. Near them grazed a couple of shaggy Indian ponies, whose wooden saddles and tattered blankets of blue and scarlet were thrown carelessly on the green turf around the gnarled roots of the tree which formed the foreground of the picture.

About noon I found myself on the meadowy bank of a clear rushing stream, whose opposite shore rose in precipitous cliffs from the water. Here the rifted hemlock and cedar, flinging their branches far over the current, contrasted vividly in their dusky green with the light foliage of the willows and sycamores that skirted the water's edge where the highway approached the brink. The collegiate institution of the little town of Lexington, with its rather pretty but formal-looking pleasure-grounds, first met my eye after fording the stream: it stands on an eminence back from the road, and forms the first object of attention in entering the village. I paused merely long enough to observe that there were indications of wealth and style about the place which are seldom

met with in the country towns of west Virginia. The pretty scenery along the rest of my route is probably familiar to you from the descriptions of the numerous travellers who have resorted to the interesting spot where I now found myself a pilgrim.

The ordinary engravings (that in Tanner's Atlas is the most spirited that I have seen) give you a perfect idea of the Natural Bridge. The first feeling when you stand by the stream below it is one of disappointment; nor is it till after you have walked under the towering arch, and surveyed from above the deep chasm which it spans, that you fully appreciate its gigantic magnitude. But though the popular descriptions have not exaggerated its interest, yet this singular formation must yield, I think, in grandeur to the Natural Tunnel of Scott county. The perfect proportions of the bridge render it the most remarkable natural curiosity of the two; but the depth of the ravine and the size of the combining masses of rock are so much greater in the tunnel, that the impression made by its yawning cavern, opening amid frightful precipices, is of a deeper character than that inspired by the airy and graceful arch of the Natural Bridge. Either, however, will amply reward the tourist.

The day that I have already passed at Charlottesville has been most agreeably spent in visiting the University of Virginia,—which is the most imposing and beautifully situated of any academic institution in the country. It lies in a healthy, fertile, and picturesque valley, and encloses every thing within its walls to make the student that paces its beautiful arcades proud of belonging to so noble an establishment. It is situated in a populous and opulent neighbourhood in east Virginia, just over the border, and within a morning's ride of the Blue Ridge. One could hardly devise a more perfect geographical division than that which separates east and west, or new and old Virginia, as the regions on either side of this remarkable wall are termed by those dwelling near it. With the exception of those abrupt gaps through which James River, the Roanoke, and the Potomac find their way to the Atlantic, the rocky height extends in an unbroken line completely through the whole State. Viewed from a distance, the blue boundary always presents the same appearance, and its smooth purple summit, everywhere parallel with the horizon, could never be mistaken for any of the mountain-ridges adjacent. So narrow, too, and so perfectly defined is it, that when you have attained the highest acclivity

ity you may almost stride the crest. "How far do you call it over the ridge?" I asked a countryman, as I reined up on an eminence which on a clear day would have commanded an extensive view upon either side. "Well, I reckon your horse's fore-legs are at this moment in old Virginia," was the significant reply. I turned in the saddle to bid a last adieu to the romantic west; but the landscape was shrouded in mist, whose rolling masses curled up so closely to the height on which I stood, that the whole valley below looked like a sea of vapour. At times the breeze would part the airy billows near me, and the jagged stem of a rifted pine would loom like the mast of a dismantled ship through the haze. I lingered in the hope of at last catching a glimpse of the beautiful tracts below; but the scudding rack soon snatched the shadowy trunk from view, and left me in doubt whether fancy had not conjured up the dim form that I had just beheld. But fancy—as I at last moved slowly from the spot—was otherwise and more agreeably busy. A thousand scenes as lovely as that now veiled from my view thronged upon memory, as I bade a lingering farewell to the glorious region where I had enjoyed them. It was now the last day of spring; and since the previous autumn I had traversed

countries where every variety of scenery that these latitudes afford was displayed upon the grandest scale, and in diversified prodigality. I had crossed the wild sources of the Ohio in western Pennsylvania, a thousand miles above its junction with the Mississippi; and I had coasted its romantic shores almost the whole distance from its mouth. I had wandered through the interminable forests of the State that bears its name, and had surveyed the open glades and smiling lakes of Michigan. I had galloped over the grassy savannas of Indiana, and hunted on the boundless prairies of Illinois. I had seen the savage hills and plashy rice-pools of Ouisconsin. I had forded the wild Washtenong of the northern peninsula,—skirted the frozen beach of its western boundary,—and stood on the hoary bluffs of the Mississippi, five hundred miles above the mouth of the Missouri,—and I had seen that overwhelming mass of waters, which rises in regions of perpetual snow, and pours its current into the ocean in the clime of the myrtle and olive, where it first mingles its boiling eddies with the Father of Rivers. I had loitered along the meadowy banks of the Illinois, and among the savage cliffs of the Kentucky; in the pastoral valleys of Tennessee, and amid the romantic glens of western

Virginia,—and now it seemed as if all these scenes came crowding in their diversified magnificence before me, while I longed for the wand of an enchanter to fix the lineaments of each as its colours sprang to life. And then came that reflection—half-regretful, half-impatient—that I have often known in my solitary wanderings,—"Why should Nature thus lavish her beauties, thus waste herself on silence? Why are there none to sing her primeval glories in our land?" Alas! the majority of mankind have no innate sense of beauty and majesty. They admire only because others have admired before them; and whether it be with an opera, a book, or a landscape, a woman or a flower, or any other beautiful and fleeting thing, men worship because others have knelt, and fall in raptures precisely where fashion and guide-books tell them that they ought. So marked, indeed, is this disposition to approve *gregariously* if we approve at all, that even genius is not free from its influence; and if a poet immortalizes one place, the rhyming brotherhood of a hundred generations will devote the powers of their art to the same identical spot; while many a scene as fair will lavish its unrifled beauties near, unnoticed and unknown.

I have often mused to this effect, while riding

day after day, and week after week, entirely alone through solitudes where the poet and painter might find the noblest subjects to inspire them. But there are other reflections incident to so solitary a tour in an untravelled country, which are but little in unison with these. There is a singular joyousness in a wilderness; a vague feeling of solitude, and a vivid sense of the primal freshness which breathes around you, that mingle most strangely together, and make you own at the time that the subduing hand of cultivation and the golden embellishments of art, could add nothing here; while the sympathy of companionship, however desirable in a crowd, would but divide the full impression of the hour. And in realizing this emotion, I have felt amid some scenes a kind of selfish pleasure, a wild delight, that the spot so lovely and so lonely was, as it were, all my own; that—like cheeks that flush and eyes that brighten at the sound of one voice and but one voice only —it bloomed alone for me. Its virgin freshness and its youth were mine. And what cared I, as the cup of delight sparkled before me, for others to pledge me in the draught? what for association to hallow or art to emboss the goblet, while I could drink it off with the bead upon the brim?

But hark! that discordant post-horn, breaking in upon these idle musings, tells me that they must close here with the tour that called them forth. I have parted with my horse, and booked a place in the stage-coach for Washington; and the breeze that, charged with the blossoms of June, floats through my open window, whispers no longer of a Winter in the West.

APPENDIX.

NOTE A.—*Page* 62.

CARVER, who visited Prairie Du Chien in 1766, describes it, under the name of "The Lower Town of the Ottagaumies," as a large place, "containing about three hundred families. The houses," he adds, "are well built, after the Indian manner, and pleasantly situated on a very rich soil, from which they raise every necessary of life in abundance. This town is the great mart where all the adjacent tribes, and even those who inhabit the most remote branches of the Mississippi, annually assemble about the latter end of May, bringing with them their furs to dispose of to the traders." The aspect of the village is very different at present. It consists, exclusive of two or three frame-built stores, of some five-and-twenty rude and ruinous dwelling-houses, which are almost black with age, and the population can hardly amount to two hundred souls. The situation of the hamlet and the features of the country adjacent are thus described in "Long's Second Expedition." "The village of Prairie Du Chien is situated four or five miles above the mouth of the Wisconsan, on a beautiful prairie, which extends along the eastern bank of the river for about ten miles in length, and which is limited to the east by a range of steep hills, rising to a height of about four hundred and thirty-five feet, and running parallel with the course of the river about a mile and a half. On the western bank are bluffs which rise to the same elevation, and are washed at their base by the river. 'Pike's Hill,' which is on the west bank, immediately op-

posite to the mouth of the Wisconsan, is about five hundred and fifty feet high. The hill has no particular limits in regard to its extent, being merely a part of the river's bluffs, which stretch along the margin of the river on the west, and retain pretty nearly the same elevation above the water. In general the acclivity toward the river is made up of precipices ranged one above another, some of which are one hundred and one hundred and fifty feet high. From the top there is a fine view of the two rivers which mingle their waters at the base of this majestic hill."—[Expedition to the Sources of St. Peter's River, vol. i. p. 238.]

Note B.—*Page* 9.

These curious remains are very numerous in the vicinity of Prairie du Chien, and extend alike along the bluffs which face the Mississippi and those which run parallel to the Ouisconsin (or Wisconsan as it is sometimes written). The former, which are the works alluded to in the text, are thus described by Major Long, in his journal of 1817 :—

"The remains of ancient works, constructed probably for military purposes, were found more numerous and of greater extent on the highlands, just above the mouth of the Wisconsan, than any of which a description has been made public, or that have as yet been discovered in the western country. There the parapets and mounds were found connected in one series of works. Wherever there was an angle in the principal lines, a mound of the largest size was erected at the angle ; the parapets were terminated by mounds at each extremity, and also at the gateways. No ditch was observed on either side of the parapet. In many places the lines were composed of parapets and mounds in conjunction, the mounds being arranged along the parapets at their usual distance from each other, and operating as flank defences to the lines.

"The Indians in the vicinity of Prairie du Chien can give no account of these ancient works, and their only mode of explaining their existence is by supposing that the country was inhabited, at a period anterior to the most remote traditions, by a race of white men similar to those of European origin, and that they were cut off

by their forefathers. 'It is said that tomahawks of brass and other metals, differing from those in use among the present Indians, have been found under the surface of the ground.'—[Keating.] And stories are told of gigantic skeletons being often disinterred in the neighbourhood. Mr. Brisbois, who has been for a long time a resident of Prairie du Chien, informed me that he saw the skeletons of eight persons that were found in digging a cellar near his house, lying side by side. They were of a gigantic size, measuring about eight feet from head to foot. He added, that he took a leg bone of one of them and placed it by the side of his own leg, in order to compare the length of the two; the bone of the skeleton extended six inches above his knee. None of these bones could be preserved, as they crumbled to dust soon after they were exposed to the atmosphere."—[Major Long's MS. as quoted in his Second Expedition.]

NOTE C.—*Page* 19.

"This river, like the Ohio, seems to unite with the Mississippi in a hilly country; the hills rise from the height of one hundred and fifty to two hundred feet; their sides are abrupt, and the soil is but indifferent. The Wisconsan has been for a long time past the usual communication between the lakes and the Mississippi. About one hundred and eighty miles above the mouth of the Wisconsan, this river comes so near to the Fox River of Green Bay, that a portage of two thousand five hundred yards across a low and level prairie, which is sometimes overflowed, establishes a connection between the two streams. From the portage down to the mouth of Fox River, in the Green Bay of Lake Michigan, the distance is computed at from one hundred and fifty to one hundred and eighty miles."—[Expedition to the Sources of St. Peter's River.]

NOTE D.—*Page* 60.

The author was not aware, when the observations contained in the text were written, that the grand scheme of uniting the lakes and the Mississippi was entertained by the general government, by whom alone it ought to be carried into execution, and that

upon the liberal scale recommended in the following estimate made by the head of the Engineer department. It was first published, while this volume was passing through the press.

ENGINEER DEPARTMENT,
Washington, June 23, 1834.

SIR: I beg leave to submit, as supplement to my letter of the 6th instant, the following *estimate* of the probable cost of a canal, of the largest dimensions, from Chicago to the mouth of the Little Vermilion of the Illinois.

The first twenty-seven miles to be one hundred feet wide at the surface, and ten feet deep; and the remaining distance of sixty-five miles to be not less than one hundred feet at the surface, and six feet deep.

From Lake Michigan to the point where a level line ten feet below its surface will intersect the valley of the Illinois River, is twenty-seven miles, twenty-five of which should not be less than 100 feet wide, and the remaining two in short sections, distributed at convenient distances, to be 200 feet wide, to accommodate boats while detained in exchanging cargoes, without interruption to the navigation. As has been stated in my letter, the average depth of the excavation for this section will be about 20 feet. This is assumed, therefore, in the estimate. The whole quantity of excavation, then, will be, on the supposition that the base of the slopes will equal the height, and that the water level will be about midway down the excavation, giving the width of that surface as the width of the section to be excavated—

25 miles, or $44{,}000 \times 33\frac{1}{3} \times 6\frac{2}{3} = 9{,}577{,}772$ c. yds.

2 miles, or $3{,}520 \times 66\frac{2}{3} \times 6\frac{2}{3} = 1{,}464{,}000$ c. yds.

11,041,772 c. yds.

Assuming one-fourth of this, say 2,760,443 cubic yards, to be rock, and the remaining three-fourths, or 8,281,329 cubic yards, to be clay and sand.

On the Chesapeake and Ohio canal the cost of quarrying rock is put down at $31\frac{1}{2}$ cents, and the excavation of earth at 9 9-10 cents per cubic yard (see page 70, Doc. 18, 1st session 22d Congress). But as the distance to which, on this canal, the excavation will have to be removed is greater, generally, than on the

Chesapeake and Ohio canal, it is supposed that an advance on these rates, of something more than one-half, must certainly cover the expense of this work.

The excavation of rock is, therefore, assumed at 50 cents, and that of clay and sand at 15 cents. We then have for

2,760,443 cubic yards of rock excavation, at 50 cents, ...	$1,380,221 50
8,281,329 cubic yards of earth excavation, at 15 cents, ...	1,242,199 35
Cost of summit, 27 miles,	$2,622,420 85

From the western termination of the summit to the Little Vermilion, the canal will follow the right bank of the river, keeping as near the bluffs as may be found necessary. Wherever the bluff is used as one of the sides of the canal, but one embankment will be required, thereby saving greatly in the cost of construction; and as it is proposed to secure to this branch of the canal a minimum navigation of six feet, the embankment will require an altitude of eight feet. This will admit, in a case of necessity, an increase of an additional foot of water without greater expense. The whole distance of single embankment is 65 miles, to which 25 miles may be added as a full allowance for double embankment, at places where the bluffs recede too far from the axis of the canal: thus, then, we will have 90 miles of embankment to construct.

The dimensions proposed for this embankment are $2\frac{1}{2}$ yards high, 4 yards wide at the top, and $14\frac{2}{3}$ at the base, giving a section of 24 83-100 multiplied by the length, which is 90 miles, or 158,400 yards, equalling 3,933,072 cubic yards at 15 cents, as before stated, $589,960 80.

On the same canal the lockage cost $1,000 per foot lift. Suppose that on account of the greater dimensions to be given to the locks on this canal, and the difficulty of procuring in a new country a sufficient number of good workmen, that each foot will cost $2,500, which may be considered large, then 139 64-100 feet fall will cost $348,100.

Culverts, aqueducts, and other masonry, will have to be constructed at various points, to admit the free discharge from streams that flow into the Illinois. The cost of these cannot at this time

be correctly estimated, but is assumed to equal that of the lockage, which must be regarded as high, $348,100.

Add for contingencies, such as diverting the Des Plaines into the Chicago River, pay of engineers, and other unforeseen expenses, ten per cent. on the foregoing amount, $390,858 16.

Recapitulation.

Cuts across summit, ...	$2,622,420 85
Embankment below summit, . .	589,960 80
Lockage, ...	348,100 00
Masonry, aqueducts, &c. &c. . .	348,100 00
Contingencies, ...	390,858 16
Total estimated cost, . . .	$4,299,439 81

This is submitted with great diffidence, it being but an approximation to what the cost may be found to be on actual construction. I have the honour to be, sir, your most obedient servant,

C. Gratiot, Chief Engineer.

To the Hon. Charles F. Mercer, Chairman, &c.

Note E.—*Page* 63.

Jacksonville, as being one of the largest inland towns of Illinois, deserves a more particular notice than it receives in the text. It is situated on elevated ground, in the midst of an undulating prairie, which is uncommonly rich and in a good state of cultivation. The plot of the town was laid off in 1825. In 1834, "The Gazetteer of Illinois" was published in the place, and in it we find the following account of the progress of society here during the intermediate nine years. The enumeration of the different pursuits in the new community is curious.

"Jacksonville has sixteen stores, six groceries, two druggist shops, two taverns or hotels, several respectable boarding-houses, one baker, two saddlers, three hatters, one silversmith, one watchmaker, two tinners, three cabinet-makers, one machinist, one house and sign painter, six tailors, two cordwainers, four blacksmiths, three chair-makers, one coach-maker, one wagon-maker, one wheelwright, eleven lawyers, and ten physicians. It has one steam flour and saw-mill, a manufactory for cotton yarn, a distillery, two oil-mills, two carding factories, a tannery, and

three brick-yards ; with a proportion of various mechanics in the building line and other trades. The public buildings are a spacious court-house of brick, a neat frame building for the Presbyterian house of worship, a large brick building for the Methodist society, and a handsome edifice, also of brick, for the Episcopal denomination ; a female academy, a brick market-house, and a county jail. The college edifices are one mile west from the town. There are two printing-offices that publish weekly papers, and also a book and job printing-office, with a bindery attached The present population of Jacksonville is about 1800, exclusive of the students."—[*Peck's Illinois Gazetteer*. Published by R. Goudy, Jacksonville, 1834.]

NOTE F.—*Page* 83.

Mr. Schoolcraft observes, that it is common in digging at the salt mines of Illinois to find fragments of antique pottery, and even entire pots of coarse earthenware, at great depths below the surface. One of these pots, which was, until a very recent period, preserved by a gentleman at Shawneetown, was disinterred at the depth of eighty feet, and was of a capacity to contain eight or ten gallons. Others have been found at even greater depths, and of greater dimensions. The composition and general appearance of this fossil pottery, according to Mr. S., cannot be distinguished from those fragments of earthenware which are disclosed by the mounds of the oldest period, so common in this quarter. They evince the same rude state of the arts. Upon referring to Schoolcraft's Travels in the central portions of the Mississippi Valley, the reader will find some curious speculations suggested by the position in which these antique vessels are found.

NOTE G.—*Page* 96.

The gravity of manner and stern dignity of deportment maintained by the Indians in their official intercourse with the white men, led the early writers, as is remarked by Mr. Schoolcraft, to conclude that they were strangers to those lighter emotions which display themselves in occasional sallies of wit and humour. The

haughty reserve which an Indian always maintains when in company with several white men, and especially when he visits our eastern cities, has served to confirm the error. There is no greater observer of time and place than an Indian; and indeed his whole education consists, not in extinguishing his emotions, but in regulating their display according to his views of decorum. I have seen the same savage, whose grim features never relaxed into a smile while receiving me as the chief of his band and doing the honours of his camp, laugh immoderately because he nearly met with the fate of Absalom, by catching his scalp-lock on a bur-oak, as we afterward rode through a grove alone together. "No person," says the writer above quoted, "has enjoyed frequent opportunities of observing the Indian character, as it appears in the social scenes of ordinary life, without observing that they possess a strong relish for witticism, and evince a propensity to indulge in ridicule, drollery, and sarcasm. In fact, no two persons can be more unlike than the orator, in all the stiff formality of a public council, and the same person in the relaxed circle of his family lodge, or when seated as a spectator of the village sports."

The following testimony to the same effect is from Long's Second Expedition:—"In their conversation the Indians frequently display considerable humour; their attempts at wit are numerous, and often successful."

Note H.—*Page* 96.

Carver says, when speaking of the religion of the tribes which he visited, "It is certain that they acknowledge one Supreme Being, or Giver of Life, who presides over all things." The testimony of the captive Colonel Smith, as quoted from his narrative in note E. vol. i., is to the same effect; and the evidence of Penn, at a much earlier day, is recorded in the text.

"All the tribes," says Mr. Thatcher, in one of those excellent little works upon Indian character recently published,* "believe in the existence of a Supreme Being, the Creator of the World,

* Indian Biography, by B. B. Thatcher, Esq., 2 vols. 18mo. Indian Traits. 2 vols. 18mo. Harpers, New-York.

to whom different names are given; as the 'Great Spirit,' or the 'Master of Life.'" There being no such thing as sects or schools of religion among the Indians, this belief will be found mixed up with many singular ideas in the minds of different individuals, according to their independence of thought or the accidents of education,—their intercourse with the whites, or their natural temperament. Many of these believe in local deities, personal divinities, and innumerable spirits of good and evil; but the *Manitto* of the Indians of the lakes, the *Owaneeyo* of the forest tribes, and the *Wahcondah* of the savages that rove the prairies, appear to be regarded alike by all as the first Great Cause, the sole Creator. "Metea, a Pottawattomie Indian, while conversing on this subject with the gentlemen of Long's Expedition, recorded his belief that there is but one God, who is a Supreme Being; but that he has made a spirit or god to be under him, whose especial duty it is to take charge of the Indians. This he thought to be the common opinion of all the Indians whom he knew. The existence of a Bad Spirit he considered as proved by the circumstance of there being bad men; for a good spirit could not have made any thing that was evil."—*Long's Second Expedition*, p. 109.

Wennebea, a chief of the Sauk tribe, who was in the suite of Major Long, believed the sun to be the residence of a male deity, who looks placidly upon the earth; and who, being propitious to man, exposes to his view the wild beasts and serpents which cross his path. "He thought that immediately after death the soul quits its mortal residence and journeys towards the setting sun, when, if its life has been spent in a manner agreeable to the Deity, it finds no difficulty in stepping over the agitated log which stretches across the gulf. It then becomes an eternal inhabitant of 'The Village of the Dead,' situated in a prairie that abounds in all the pleasures which the simple imagination of the Indian can covet. The moon, on the contrary, he held to be an adverse female deity, whose delight it is to cross man in all his pursuits." —*Ibid.*, page 210.

"The Dacotahs believe in the existence of a Supreme Being, and of a number of subordinate ones, whose powers, privileges, and attributes, vary very much. They worship the Great Spirit as the Creator of all things that exist, and as the Ruler and Dis-

poser of the universe. They hold him to be the source of all good, and the cause of no evil whatever. The Dacotahs admit that there are in man two distinct essences, to which they respectively apply the terms of wanare and wahkan, which Major Long's interpreters translated soul and spirit. They believe that after death the souls go to the Wenare Tebe, or dwelling-place of souls, where their life is an easy and a blissful one; they hunt the buffalo, plant corn, &c."—*Ibid.*, page 392, 3.

But it is useless to cite authorities upon this subject, when the concurrent testimony of almost all intelligent writers is to the same effect.—*See Heckwelder, Colden's History of the Five Nations*, &c.

Note I.—*Page* 115.

The new work of Mr. Schoolcraft,* which appeared in the autumn, is the first publication that has established the true sources of the Mississippi. The expedition of which he was the head was nominally undertaken by virtue of an act of Congress to vaccinate the North-western Indians within our territories, and is the third national attempt that has been made to arrive at the true sources of the Mississippi,—General Pike's being the first, and a movement in that direction by Governor Cass, with an exploring party, the second. A ridiculous Italian, of whom a hundred laughable stories are told on the frontier, has, in the mean time, most absurdly claimed, in a book published abroad, to be the true discoverer of the fountain-head. Lac La Biche, or Itasca Lake, as Mr. Schoolcraft more euphoniously calls it, has been long known to the Indian traders; but its position has always been laid down erroneously upon the map; and it is now found that the Mississippi, after long running to the north till it reaches a high latitude, and diffuses itself in a hundred swamps and lakes, becomes again a distinct stream; and taking a sudden dip to the south, hides its head at last in a lake of clear water, somewhere about the latitude of Fond du Lac, on Lake Superior. Mr. Schoolcraft was accompanied on this exploring tour by Lieu-

* Narrative of an Expedition through the Upper Mississippi to the Itasca Lake, the actual source of this river; by Henry R. Schoolcraft. New-York: Harpers.

tenant James Allen, of the Fifth Infantry, from whose official report to the Secretary of War the following account of the sources of the Mississippi is taken.

"We entered the Mississippi from a bay on the west side of Cass Lake, and passed, in a short distance, through two small lakes and a savanna, above all which we still found a large river, forty or fifty yards broad, and from two to six feet deep, which wound its way through a narrow valley of low, alluvial bottom, confined by pine hills, up to Lac Travers, forty miles above Cass Lake. In this distance there are many rapids, running over boulders of primitive rock; but there is no fall, and no rock is seen in place.

"Lac Travers may well be arranged among the sources of the Mississippi. It is a beautiful lake, about ten miles long from north to south, and about half as broad, surrounded by pine woods, which rise into high hills on the north and north-west, forming a part of the chain dividing the waters of the Mississippi from those of Red River. The western shore is much indented with bays, but the east and south-east is beautifully regular and plain, with a sandy bank, and beach of pure white sand. The river empties into the south end of the lake, and runs out at the east side, not far from its entrance, leaving the great body of the lake to the north of our passage through it. There is a trading-house on the west bank, near the mouth of the river, which is occupied in winter by a clerk of Mr. Aitkin. From Lake Travers we passed by a broad channel, one hundred yards long, into another small lake, and, half a mile above this, came to the forks of the river. The branches are of nearly the same breadth, about forty feet, but the stronger current of the right hand branch denoted it much the larger. We ascended the left or east branch, as we had intended, which soon narrowed to twenty feet breadth, and in a distance of ten or twelve miles brought us to Lake Rahbahkanna, or Resting Lake; a pretty little lake, four miles in diameter, and nearly round, with a low beach of smooth pebbles all round it. We encamped a few miles above this lake at seven P. M., having come this day, by my estimate, fifty-five miles. Our course to Lac Travers was north-west; from the latter, nearly south.

"July 12.—This was a rainy, disagreeable day, and the mos-

chetoes were numerous, hungry, and extremely annoying; but we travelled, notwithstanding, at our usual speedy rate. Our course has been south, and the valley of the river was savanne, and tamrack and cedar swamp; but generally narrow, about half a mile broad, with low ridges and a miserable growth of pine bordering it on both sides. The river has become very small, and somewhat rapid; and we have encamped after making a portage of two miles round a chain of rapids. One of our Indians killed a deer this morning, and we saw many more during the day. This country is so very remote and dreary that the Indians seldom visit it, and the deer are more abundant than about the river below; ducks are also very numerous in the savannes where there is wild rice. Journey fifty-two miles.

"July 13.—We ascended the river in our canoes ten miles farther, to a little lake (Usaw-way, or Perch Lake), about two miles long and half a mile broad; the river was very narrow and crooked, through a low, narrow meadow, and a little above this lake we left it; *seeing that we had now traced this smaller branch of the Mississippi into the very swamps and meadows, from the drainage of which it takes its rise.*

"From here we set off over land, in a south-west direction, to reach Lac La Biche, represented as the source of the larger branch. Our canoes and baggage being very light, all was transported at one load, one man carrying the canoe, and the other the baggage of each of the party. In this way we made a portage of six miles in four hours, and struck the lake, the object of our search, near the end of its south-eastern bay. The first mile of the portage was through a tamrack swamp, and the remainder, excepting a little lake of 300 yards diameter, was over pine ridges of the poorest character imaginable. The soil was almost pure sand, and the pine was stinted and mostly of the *scrub* species (pinus banksianus), which, hung as it was with lichens, and no other growth, not even a bush or shrub, mixed with it, presented a picture of landscape more dismal and gloomy than any other part of this miserably poor country that we had seen. Not a bird or animal, scarce even a fly, was to be seen in the whole distance of this portage, and it would seem that no kind of animal life was adapted to so gloomy a region.

"From these hills, which were seldom more than two or three

hundred feet high, we came suddenly down to the lake ; and we embarked and passed nearly through it to an island, near its west end, where we remained one or two hours.

"We were now sure that we had reached the *true source* of the great river, and a feeling of great satisfaction was manifested by all the party ; Mr. Schoolcraft hoisted a flag on a high staff on the island, and left it flying.

"Lac La Biche is about seven miles long, and from one to three broad ; but is of an irregular shape, conforming to the bases of pine hills, which, for a great part of its circumference, rise abruptly from its shore. It is deep, and very clear and cold, and seemed to be well stocked with fish. Its shores show some boulders of primitive rock, but no rock in place, and are generally skirted near the water with bushes. The island, the only one of the lake, and which I have called Schoolcraft island, is one hundred and fifty yards long, fifty yards broad, and twenty or thirty feet elevated in its highest part ; a little rocky in boulders, and grown over in pine, spruce, wild cherry, and elm.

"There can be no doubt but that this is the *true source and fountain of the longest and largest branch of the Mississippi.* All our information that we had been able to collect on the way, from traders and Indians, pointed to it as such ; and our principal Indian guide, Yellow Head, who has proved to us his close intelligence of the country, represents the same. He has formerly hunted all around it, and says there is a little creek, too small for even our little canoes to ascend, emptying into the south bay of this lake, and having its source at the base of a chain of high hills, which we could see, not two miles off, and that this is the only stream of any description running into it. In fact, the whole country showed that there was no stream beyond, for the lake was shut in on all sides by pine hills, and the only opening through them was that by which it discharged itself. To the west we could see distinctly a range of almost mountains, covered with pine, which was undoubtedly the chain dividing us from the waters of Red River.

"Lac La Biche is but little west of *south* from Cass Lake, and almost due south from Lac Travers, which is a different position from that assigned to it on published maps, where it is invariably represented north of Cass Lake. There is, however, a little

stream, Turtle River, entering Cass Lake from the north, in the route of traders to Turtle Lake and Red Lake, but it is a very small and insignificant stream, and is only forty-five miles in length.

"We left Lac La Biche from its northern bay, having coasted nearly its whole circumference, and found the Mississippi, at its very egress from the lake, a respectable stream; its channel being twenty feet broad and two feet deep, and current five miles per hour. Its course was north-west, and soon ran through a chain of high pine hills, where the channel contracted very much, and numerous rapids occurred, of very great fall, over boulders of primitive rock; the river running, for the distance, in a deep ravine."

Note J.—*Page* 151.

Lexington, which was for a long time the political metropolis of Kentucky, and the most important town in the West, received its name from a band of hunters who were encamped under the shade of the original forest where it is built, and who, on receiving the first intelligence of the battle of Lexington in Massachusetts, named the town after that in which commenced the great struggle of American Independence. Transylvania University, says Mr. Flint, has fair claims to precedence among western collegiate institutions. It has twelve professors and tutors, and in the academical, medical, and law classes, three hundred and seventy-six students. The public buildings of Lexington are generally in very good taste, and, in the words of Mr. Flint, "the stranger, in the midst of its polished and interesting society, cannot but be carried back by strong contrast to the time when the patriarchal hunters of Kentucky, reclining on their buffalo robes around their evening fires, canopied by the lofty trees and the stars, gave it the name it bears by patriotic acclamation."—*Flint's Valley of the Mississippi.*

Note K.—*Page* 161.

The particulars of this tragic tale of passion, as set forth in the published "Confession" of the principal actor, and established by

the report of "The Trial of J. O. Beauchamp for the Murder of Colonel S. P. Sharp, a Member of the Legislature, and late Attorney-general of Kentucky," are as follows:—Beauchamp, while a student at law in a county town of Kentucky, became attached to Miss Cook, a young female who had been seduced by Colonel Sharp. The lady, in consequence of the stain upon her reputation, lived very much retired, and refused to receive the addresses of her new admirer until he had repeatedly tendered his hand in marriage. His solicitations at last prevailed with her; but she consented to become his wife solely upon the condition, that he would revenge her wrongs towards Colonel S. by taking his life before they were united at the altar. The infatuated student pledged himself to the bloody contract; and instantly challenged the seducer, who refused to meet him. Failing in the vengeance to which he had pledged himself in the hour of his wild betrothal, Beauchamp returned to his affianced wife; who from that moment, as Beauchamp expresses it, got the "womanish whim" into her head to be herself the destroyer of her seducer. To this end she practised pistol-shooting for several months, until, as her lover avers, "she could place a ball with perfect accuracy." But their engagement having now subsisted for some time, and Beauchamp having completed his law studies, he prevailed upon the lady to give him the rights of a legal protector. "I had now," he says, "married Miss C——, and felt that I had a sufficient apology before the world to revenge upon Colonel S—— the injury he had done her. Neither could I any longer think of the wild idea of my wife's revenging her own wrongs."

He seems to have made up his mind, however, to seek Colonel S. no more, but only to "bide his time," and sacrifice his victim when chance should throw him in his way. More than a year must now have elapsed, and the vow of vengeance was unfulfilled, when a report reached Beauchamp's ears, which, if it had any foundation at all, was enough of itself to fill a far better-regulated mind than his with the most deadly purpose. Parties were running high in Kentucky, and Colonel S. was a candidate for office. His character, with those of others, was assailed with all the virulence of the period. The newspapers were rife with personal calumny, and among other charges, that of the seduction of Miss C. was trumpeted to the world. His friends were not

less on the alert to shield his name. In such a phrensied state of the public mind men stop at nothing, and a hellish rumour got abroad which reached at length the ears of Beauchamp. Some one wrote to him, "that S. had set afloat insinuations that the illicit offspring of the female to whom he was now married was a mulatto; and this in order to do away the charge against the colonel for seduction."

"I had now," says the confession, "meditated upon Colonel S.'s death so long, that I was perfectly able to make dispassionate calculations and weigh probable consequences with as much calmness as would determine an ordinary matter of business. I did not kill Colonel S. through the phrensy of passion: I did it with the fullest and most mature deliberation; because the clearest dictates of my judgment told me that I ought to do it,—and I still think so. But after I had gotten this information, I did resolve to kill Colonel Sharp publicly in Frankfort." Upon subsequent consultation with his wife, however, he determined to accomplish his purpose by secret assassination. The catastrophe is best told in Beauchamp's own words. He resorts to Frankfort, and lurks in disguise after nightfall around the dwelling of his victim. He sees him enter, and he withdraws to the public square opposite, till the streets are still and the lights about the houses extinguished. The casements are at length darkened; but his purpose is yet delayed by some late revellers that cross his path. He hears their last retiring footfalls, and then moves from his lurking-place.

"There was no moonlight; but the stars gave light enough wherewithal to discern the face of an acquaintance, on coming near him and closely noticing his face. I drew my dagger, and proceeded to the door: I knocked three times, loud and quick! Colonel Sharp said, 'Who's there?'—'Covington,' I replied. Quickly Colonel Sharp's foot was heard upon the floor. I saw under the door he approached without a light. I drew my mask from my face, and immediately Colonel Sharp opened the door; I advanced into the room, and with my left hand I grasped his right wrist, as with an iron hand. The violence of the grasp made Colonel Sharp spring back, and trying to disengage his wrist, he said, 'What Covington is this?' I replied, 'John A. Covington, sir.'—'I don't know you,' said Colonel Sharp, 'I

knew John W. Covington.'—'My name,' said I, 'is John A. Covington,' and about the time I said that, Mrs. Sharp, whom I had seen appear in the partition door as I entered the outer door, disappeared. She had become alarmed, I imagine, by the little scuffle Colonel Sharp made when he sprang back to get his wrist loose from my grasp. Seeing her disappear, I said to Colonel Sharp, in a tone as though I was deeply mortified at his not knowing me, 'And did you not know me sure enough?'—'Not with your handkerchief about your face,' said Colonel Sharp; for the handkerchief with which I had confined my mask upon my forehead was still round my forehead. I then replied, in a soft, conciliating, persuasive tone of voice, 'Come to the light, colonel, and you will know me;' and pulling him by the arm, he came readily to the door. I stepped with one foot back upon the first step out at the door, and still holding his wrist with my left hand, I stripped my hat and handkerchief from over my forehead and head, and looked right up in Colonel Sharp's face. He knew me the more readily, I imagine, by my long, bushy, curly suit of hair. He sprang back, and exclaimed, in the deepest tone of astonishment, dismay, and horror and despair I ever heard, 'Great God! it's him!' and as he said that he fell on his knees, after failing to jerk loose his wrist from my grasp. As he fell on his knees I let go his wrist and grasped him by the throat, and dashing him against the facing of the door, I choked him against it to keep him from hallooing, and muttered in his face, 'Die, you villain!' and as I said that, I plunged the dagger to his heart. Letting him go at the moment I stabbed him, he sprang up from his knees, and endeavoured to throw his arms round my neck, saying, 'Pray, Mr. Beauchamp!' but as he said that, I struck him in the face with my left hand, and knocked him his full length into the room. By this time I saw the light approaching, and dashed a little way off and put on my mask. I then came and squatted in the alley near the door, to hear if he should speak. His wife talked to him, but he could not answer her.

"Before I thought they could possibly have gotten word to the doctor, he came running in. So soon as he entered the room he exclaimed, 'Great God! Beauchamp has done this! I always expected it!' The town was now alarmed, and the people began to crowd the house very fast."

The homicide then retired to the river's bank, where he changed his dress; and proceeding to his lodgings, he waited till after breakfast the next morning before he took his horse and rode homeward; where his wife received him with open arms, and aided "in setting the house in order for battle and defence," should the friends of the murdered man make a family feud of it. The regular officers of justice were the first persons, however, who presented themselves; and Beauchamp readily surrendered himself to these, and being conducted back to Frankfort, he was thrown into prison to await his trial.

Beauchamp appears to have been convicted of the murder upon the most ample circumstantial evidence; though he himself says in his confession that there was no actual testimony,—that the whole charge was based on suspicion, and that that suspicion attached to him, "merely because there was a feeling in the breast of every man which told him I (he) ought to have killed Colonel S. The plain, candid, common sense sort of people thought me guilty, although they had no sort of proof even to raise a suspicion, only looking to the motive, and justification, or cause, which I had to kill him." The condition of his mind, after being thrown into prison, may in some degree be judged from the following lines, which he is said to have addressed to his wife from within its walls, and which have been published as genuine :—

"Daughter of grief! thy spirit moves,
In every whistling wind that roves
Across my prison grates:
It bids my soul majestic bear!
And with its sister spirit soar
Aloft to heaven's gates.

"In visions bright it hovers round,
And whispers the delightful sound,
'Peace to thy troubled mind.
What though unfeeling worlds unite
To vent on you their venom'd spite,
Thy Anna's heart is kind.'

"Then rave, ye angry storms of fate!
Spit on your vilest blasts of hate,
Ye perjured reptile worms!
Disdaining aught to yield, my soul
Shall gladly fly this earthly goal,
Safe to my Anna's arms.

"For—oh! the thought!—triumphant, proud,
The soul within itself can shroud
The purpose of the brave;
Secure of her, the dear one's love,
For whom he dies and mounts above
Misfortune's highest wave!"

After conviction, Mrs. Beauchamp was allowed to remain with her husband; and the last moments of this infatuated and ill-fated pair were marked by the same strange intermixture of moral obliquity and religious fanaticism, blended with chivalric heroism and the most touching devotion to each other, by which their intercourse throughout appears to have been characterized. They passed their time together in composing prayers and verses. The first breathed all of Christian humility and contrition, mingled with a firm reliance upon heavenly mercy: the last are made up of the ravings of insane passion and gratified vengeance. At length, as the day of execution approached, they determined to commit suicide; and Beauchamp describes their situation in a memorandum to this effect:—

"I have now arranged all my papers, and closed every thing preparatory to quitting this scene of action. My beloved wife—for whom, oh! how does my soul now melt in affection!—is preparing to lie down with me to sleep, and wake no more. Our spirits will, in a few moments, leave these bodies, and wing their way to the unknown abode which our God may assign them!

"We have a vial of laudanum, which my wife, with as much composure as she ever shared with me a glass of wine, is carefully dividing into equal portions, one for each of us.

"I mark her serene aspect! I should be lost in amazement and astonishment at her strength of mind, which can enable her so composedly to meet death, did I not find in my own feelings

that resignation, nay, joy, which makes Death, so far from being the 'King of Terrors,' become the 'Prince of Peace.'

"We have kneeled to the Omnipotent and Omniscient God, the Creator and Mover of all minds, so to direct, inspire, and influence our minds, that in all things we may discern what it is his will we should do, and we would endeavour to do it. And we pray to him with humility and sincerity, that if in any thing we do that which is contrary to his will, he would pardon his weak and erring creatures."

On the back of the paper which contained this singular record of the dying lovers, the following directions for their burial were inscribed :—

"We do not wish our faces uncovered after we are shrouded, particularly after we are removed to Bloomfield. We wish to be placed with my wife's head on my right arm, and that confined round upon her bosom."

This note was signed by Beauchamp, and these lines were meant to accompany it. They are entitled an "Epitaph to be engraven on the tombstone of Mr. and Mrs. Beauchamp. Written by Mrs. Beauchamp."

"Entomb'd within each other's arms,
The husband and the wife repose ;
Safe from life's never-ending storms,
And safe from all their cruel foes.

"A child of evil fate she lived,
A villain's wiles her peace had cross'd,
The husband of her heart revived
The happiness she long had lost.

"Daughter of virtue ! moist thy tear,
This tomb of love and honour claim ;
For thy defence the husband here
Laid down in youth his life and fame.

"His wife disdained a life forlorn,
Without her heart's lov'd, honour'd lord;
Then, reader, here their fortunes mourn,
Who for their love their life-blood pour'd."

A postscript was added to this effect :—

"*Thursday night*, 10 *o'clock*, *July* 6*th*, 1826.

"After we had taken the laudanum last night, at about twelve o'clock, we remained on our knees some hours, at prayer, and then laid down and placed our bodies in the fond embrace in which we wish them interred. My wife laid her head on my right arm, with which I encircled her body, and tied my right hand to her left upon her bosom. We also, as we laid side by side, confined our bodies together with a handkerchief, to prevent the struggles of death from severing us. Thus we lay in prayer for hours, in the momentary expectation of dropping to sleep, to awake in eternity.

"My wife is now asleep; I hope to wake no more in this world! I have no more laudanum to take, and shall await the disposition which the Lord chooses to make of my body; content, that if I cannot die with my wife, I shall ere this time to-morrow be in the realms of eternal felicity.

"J. O. BEAUCHAMP."

The laudanum failed in its effect. The day of execution arrived, and the morning found them still both alive. The catastrophe is best told in the verbatim account of the newspapers of the day.

"At an early hour the drums were heard beating, and men in uniform were seen mingling among the citizens. As the day advanced, people came pouring in from the country in every direction, filling up the streets; while an increasing multitude was seen surrounding the gallows, which was erected on a hill near the place.

"About the hour of ten o'clock the jailer went out, and no person was left with them but Mr. Edrington, the guard. A

feeble candle gave the only light which shone in this fearful abode. The only entrance was through a trap-door above, in which stood a ladder.

"Beauchamp and his wife frequently conversed together in a whisper. At length, she requested Mr. Edrington to step out for a minute, alleging that she wished to get up. He ascended the ladder, and shut the trap-door partly down, but kept in a position where he could see what was going on below. There was no movement, and he was in the act of returning, when Mrs. Beauchamp said, 'Don't come yet.'—'O yes, come down,' said Beauchamp. He then said his wife was too weak to sit up, and expressed a wish that she should leave the jail; and the guard urged the same thing. She said she would not leave her husband until he was taken out for execution. She then spoke of suicide, and declared she would not survive her husband. About half-past eleven, the guard observed them whispering together for some time. At length, Beauchamp said aloud, 'My dear, you are not strong enough to get up.'—'Yes, I am,' said she, throwing her arms up, 'see how strong I am.' She then requested the guard to step out immediately, pretending great urgency. He again went up the ladder, turned the trap-door partly down, and was stepping round into a position where he could observe them, when he heard a deep sigh, and Beauchamp called him. He went down, and found Beauchamp lying on his back, apparently in great alarm, and in loud and earnest prayer. Mrs. Beauchamp was lying partly on her left side, with her head on her husband's breast, and her right arm thrown over him. The guard supposed that in attempting to rise she had, from weakness, fallen on him. Not suspecting any thing very serious had happened, he sat down, resting his head on the table, until Beauchamp had finished his prayer. As soon as he had closed his prayer he seemed entirely composed, and observed to the guard, 'Tell my father that my wife and myself are going straight to heaven; we are dying.' The guard replied, 'No, I reckon not.' Beauchamp said, 'Yes, it is so; we have killed ourselves.' The guard sprang up, suspecting that they had again taken poison; but as he stepped around the bed, he saw something in Mrs. B.'s right hand. He raised her arm, and found it to be a knife, sharpened at the point, and bloody about half-way up. He asked where they got that

knife; both answered, that they had long kept it concealed for that occasion. On discovering the bloody knife the guard looked upon the bed, and discovered that Mrs. B. had a stab a little to the right of the centre of the abdomen, which had been laid bare for that purpose. She did not sigh, nor groan, nor show any symptom of pain. He asked B. whether he was stabbed too. He replied, 'Yes,' and raised up his shirt, which had been drawn out of his drawers and rolled up on his body to leave it bare, but had fallen back over the wound. He was stabbed about the centre of the body, just below the pit of the stomach; but his wound was not so wide as that of his wife. He said he had taken the knife and struck first; and that his wife had parried his arm, wrested the knife from him, and plunged it in herself. He said he feared his wound was not mortal, and begged the guard to get some laudanum for him.

"As soon as he discovered they were stabbed, the guard called for assistance, and the jailer with others immediately came in. Beauchamp begged that they would take his wife out and attempt to save her. Without any opposition from her, she was immediately removed into one of the rooms of the jailer's house. To the inquiries of those who surrounded her she replied, 'I struck the fatal blow myself, and am dying for my dear husband.' She now suffered great pain, and was evidently in the agonies of death. Her screams reached the ears of Beauchamp in his dungeon, and he asked, 'Is that my dear wife? Do bring me word what she says.'

"The physicians, Roberts, Majors, Wilkinson, had examined her wound, and pronounced it mortal, especially in her present debilitated state.

"It was now determined to take him to the gallows as soon as possible. They were carrying him through the passage of the jailer's house, when he begged to see his wife. The physicians told him she was not badly hurt, and would soon get over it; and some objection was made to stopping. He said it was cruel, and they carried him in and laid him on the bed beside her. He placed his hand on her face, and said, 'My dear, do you know that this is the hand of your husband?' She returned no answer. He felt of her pulse, and said, 'Physicians, you have deceived me—she is dying.' To the ladies who surrounded the

bed he said, 'From you, ladies, I demand a tear of sympathy.' He laid conversing with perfect composure, occasionally putting one hand upon his wife's face, and feeling her pulse with the other, until he had felt the last throb. 'Farewell,' said he, 'child of sorrow—Farewell, child of misfortune and persecution—you are now secure from the tongue of slander—For you I have lived; for you I die.' He then kissed her twice and said, 'I am now ready to go.'

"It was now half-past 12 o'clock. The military were drawn up, surrounded by an immense crowd, all of whom were listening with intense interest to every rumour of the dying pair. As Beauchamp was too weak to set on his coffin in a cart, a covered dearborn had been provided for his conveyance to the gallows. He was now brought out in a blanket and laid in it. At his particular request, Mr. M'Intosh took a seat by his side. Some of the ministers of the gospel had taken leave of him, to whom he expressed the same confidence in the forgiveness of his sins, and the hope of a happy immortality, as in the morning. The drums beat, and the military and crowd moved up Clinton-street to Ann-street, along Ann-street to Montgomery-street at Weiseger's tavern, and up Montgomery-street.

"'This music,' said he, 'is delightful; I never moved more happily in my life.' Observing many ladies looking out at the windows, he requested the side curtains of the dearborn to be raised so that he could see them, and raising up a little, continued to wave his hand to them in token of respect, until the procession got out of town.

"When they had reached the gallows, and he saw his coffin, he seemed wholly unmoved. The Rev. Eli Smith, S. M. Pinel, J. T. Mills, and other preachers surrounded him, inquiring the state of his mind. To all of their questions he answered he was sure of going to heaven—that his sins were forgiven him on Thursday morning. In every interval of the conversation he would say, with some impatience, 'I want to be executed—I want to go to my wife.'

"He was now lifted out of the dearborn in a blanket, and set up, supported by those around him, on his coffin, in the cart. He asked for water, and requested that while a messenger was gone for it, the music would play Bonaparte's retreat from Mos-

cow. On his repeated request it was done. He then drank some water, and in a firm voice requested that they would tell him when they were ready, and said he would rise up. He was told all was ready : with assistance, he rose up ; the cart started ; and he was launched into eternity.

"In a few hours his afflicted father started with the two bodies for Bloomfield, Nelson county, where they were buried ; both in one coffin."

Note L.—*Page* 243.

The following extract from the private journal of Col. Long forms a part of the paper alluded to in the text.

"Having ascended Cove ridge, we turned aside from our route to visit the natural bridge, or tunnel, situated on Buck-eye, or Stock creek, about a mile below the Sycamore camp,* and about one and a half miles from a place called Rye cove, which occupies a spacious recess between two prominent spurs of Powell's mountain, the sight of the natural tunnel being included within a spur of Cove ridge, which is one of the mountain spurs just alluded to. Here is presented one of the most remarkable and attractive curiosities of its kind to be witnessed in this or any other country. The creek, which is about seven yards wide, and has a general course about S. 15° W., here passes through a hill elevated from two to three hundred feet above the surface of the stream, winding its way through a huge subterraneous cavern, or grotto, whose roof is vaulted in a peculiar manner, and rises from thirty to seventy or eighty feet above its floor. The sides of this gigantic cavern rise perpendicularly in some places to the height of fifteen or twenty feet, and in others are formed by the springing of its vaulted roof immediately from its floor. The width of the tunnel varies from fifty to one hundred and fifty feet ; its course is that of a continuous curve, resembling the letter S, first winding to the right as we enter on the upper side, then to

* This designation has been given to a spot in the valley of the creek, where formerly stood a hollow sycamore (platanus occidentalis) tree of an enormous size, the remains of which are still to be seen, and in the cavity of which, while it stood, fifteen persons are said to have encamped at the same time together

the left, again to the right, and then again to the left, on arriving at the entrance on the lower side. Such is its peculiar form, that an observer standing at a point about midway of its subterranean course is completely excluded from a view of either entrance, and is left to grope in the dark through a distance of about twenty yards, occupying an intermediate portion of the tunnel. When the sun is near the meridian, and his rays fall upon both entrances, the light reflected from both extremities of the tunnel contributes to mollify the darkness of the interior portion into a dusky twilight.

"The extent of the tunnel from its upper to its lower extremity, following its meanders, is about 150 yards, in which distance the stream falls about ten feet, emitting, in its passage over a rocky bed, an agreeable murmur, which is rendered more grateful by its reverberations upon the roof and sides of the grotto. The discharge of a musket produces a crash-like report, succeeded by a roar in the tunnel, which has a deafening effect upon the ear.

"The hill through which this singular perforation leads descends in a direction from east to west, across the line of the creek, and affords a very convenient passage for a road which traverses it at this place, having a descent, in the direction just mentioned, of about four degrees.

"The rocks found in this part of the country are principally sandstone and limestone, in stratifications nearly horizontal, with occasional beds of clay slate. A mixture of the two former frequently occurs among the alternations presented by these rocks. A variety of rock resembling the French bur occurs in abundance on Butcher's fork, or Powell's river, about twenty miles northwardly of the natural tunnel. Fossils are more or less abundant in these and other rocks. Fossil bones of an interesting character have been found in several places. Salt-petre caves are numerous. Coves, sinks, and subterranean caverns are strikingly characteristic, not only of the country circumjacent to the natural tunnel, but of the region generally situated between the Cumberland mountain and the Blue ridge or Apalachian mountain. Bituminous coal, with its usual accompaniments, abounds in the northerly parts of this region; and in the intermediate and southerly portions, iron, variously combined, often

magnetic, together with talcose rocks, &c. &c., are to be met with in great abundance.

"The mountains in this vicinity, long. 82° to 84° W. from Greenwich, lat. 35° to 36° N., are among the most lofty of the Alleghany range. Several knobs in this part of the range, among which may be enumerated the Roan, the Unaka, the Bald, the Black, and Powell's mountains, rise to the height of at least four thousand five hundred feet above tide."

Note M.—*Page* 271.

The circumstances relating to this affair are thus related by Col. Stewart, as quoted in the "Sketches of Western Adventure."

"A Captain Arbuckle commanded the garrison of the fort erected at Point Pleasant after the battle fought by General Lewis with the Indians at that place in October, 1774. In the succeeding year, when the revolutionary war had commenced, the agents of Great Britain exerted themselves to excite the Indians to hostility against the Americans, towards whom the most of the Shawanees already entertained a strong animosity. Two of the chiefs, however, not participating in that animosity, visited the garrison at the point when Arbuckle continued to command. Col. Stewart was at the post in the character of volunteer, and was an eye-witness of the facts which he relates. Cornstalk represented his unwillingness to take a part in the war on the British side; but stated that his people, except himself and his tribe, were determined on war with us, and he supposed that he and his people would have to go with the stream. On this intimation Arbuckle resolved to detain the two chiefs and a third Shawanee who came with them to the fort as hostages, under the expectation of preventing thereby any hostile effort of the nation. On the day before these unfortunate Indians fell victims to the fury of the garrison, Elenipsico, the son of Cornstalk, repaired to Point Pleasant for the purpose of visiting his father. The succeeding day two men belonging to the garrison, whose names were Harrison and Gilmore, crossed the Kenawha for the purpose of hunting in the woods beyond it. On their return from hunting, some Indians who had come to view the position at the Point concealed themselves in the woods

near the mouth of the Kenawha, and killed Gilmore while endeavouring to pass them. Col. Stewart and Captain Arbuckle were standing on the opposite bank of the river at the time, and were surprised that a gun had been fired so near the fort, in violation of orders which had been issued inhibiting such an act. Hamilton ran down the bank and cried out that Gilmore was killed. Captain Hall commanded the company to which Gilmore belonged. His men leaped into a canoe, and hastened to the relief of Hamilton. They brought the body of Gilmore, weltering in blood, and the head scalped, across the river. The canoe had scarcely reached the shore when Hall's men cried out, 'Let us kill the Indians in the fort.' Captain Hall placed himself in front of his soldiers, and they ascended the river's bank pale with rage, and carrying their loaded firelocks in their hands. Colonel Stewart and Captain Arbuckle exerted themselves in vain to dissuade these men, exasperated to madness by the spectacle of Gilmore's corpse, from the cruel deed which they contemplated. They cocked their guns, threatening those gentlemen with instant death if they did not desist, and rushed into the fort.

"The interpreter's wife, who had been a captive among the Indians, and felt an affection for them, ran to their cabin and informed them that Hall's soldiers were advancing with the intention of taking their lives, because they believed that the Indians who killed Gilmore had come with Cornstalk's son on the preceding day. This the young man solemnly denied, and avowed that he knew nothing of them. His father, perceiving that Elenipsico was in great agitation, encouraged him, and advised him not to fear. 'If the Great Spirit,' said he, 'has sent you here to be killed, you ought to die like a man!' As the soldiers approached the door Cornstalk rose to meet them, and received seven or eight balls, which instantly terminated his existence. His son was shot down in the seat which he occupied. The Red Hawk made an attempt to climb the chimney, but fell by the fire of some of Hall's men. 'The other Indian,' says Colonel Stewart, 'was shamefully mangled, and I grieved to see him so long dying.'"

THE END.